AUGUST 1913 $1.00 a

The Black Cat

JUL 26 1913

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS JUL 29 1913

BEST COMPLETE SHORT STORIES

Read —— A Man and His Gun

You will laugh!

THE SHORTSTORY PUBLISHING CO. Loring Avenue, Salem, Massachusetts

VOLUME TIGHTLY BOUND BEST COPY

Skin Energy

The skin is an important contributor to the sum of human energy. So long as it is kept fresh, pure and healthy, it is an inspiriting and an invigorating influence; and the best known means of keeping it in that condition is to use

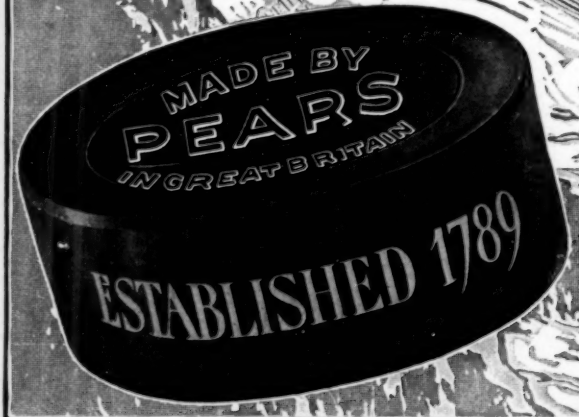
Pears' Soap

This completely pure soap, which has been the leading toilet soap for a hundred and twenty years, contains in perfect combination the precise emollient and detergent properties necessary to secure the natural actions of the various functions of the skin.

There is a permanent feeling of freshness, briskness and vitality about a skin that is regularly washed with Pears. The skin surface is always kept soft and fine and natural.

The skin is kept fresh and young looking by using Pears which lasts twice as long, so is twice as cheap as common toilet soaps.

THE GREAT ENGLISH COMPLEXION SOAP



"All rights secured"

OF ALL SCENTED SOAPS PEARS' OTTO OF ROSE IS THE BEST

Y AVAILABLE

The Black Cat's Classified Advertising

RATE—60 cents an agate line. 5 per cent cash discount. Minimum space 5 agate lines.
Forms close about the 20th of second month preceding date of publication.

GAMES AND ENTERTAINMENTS

200 kinds iron, wood, and wire puzzles. Catalog and leader 10c., 3 for 25c., 7 for 50c., 15 for $1.00. No two alike.
Western Puzzle Works, Station B, St. Paul, Minn.

VENTRILOQUISM learned by any Man or Boy at Home. Small cost. Send today 2-cent stamp for particulars and proof.
O. A. Smith, R. 48, 823 Bigelow St., Peoria, Ill.

FREE Big Catalog (Illustrated), of Magic Tricks and Puzzles with wonderful 20th Century Card Trick, 10c. Mystify your friends.
WALWEN MAGIC, 150 Nassau St., New York.

STATIONERY AND PRINTING

Cards, circulars, books, newspaper. Press $5 Larger $18. Rotary $60. Save money. Big profit printing for others. All easy, rules sent. Write factory for press catalog, TYPE, cards, paper, outfits, etc.
THE PRESS CO., - - - - Meriden, Conn.

FINE CALLING CARDS 100 FOR 25c.
FOR MEN, WOMEN, GIRLS, AND BOYS. Printed in Script or Old English. 100 FREE if you send $1.00 for 4 orders. Club with your friends. *All orders filled promptly.*
Herman E. Cassino, 134 Main St., Peabody, Mass.

A SUITABLE PRESENT. 100 sheets of note paper and envelopes printed, postpaid to any address for $1.25. We do all kinds of printing. Write for our latest sample book.
ROSENTHAL BROS., 314 Canal, Chicago, Ill.

OUT IN THE OPEN

FREE TO EVERY BOY AND GIRL. We give a fine Eureka Camera and complete outfit, plates, chemicals, etc., with full instructions. Just send your name and address, we send you 24 papers Gold Eye Needles. Sell 2 papers for 10c., giving a Thimble free. When sold send us the $1.20 and the Camera and complete outfit is yours. Address
GLOBE CO., Dept. 287, Greenville, Pa.

Take finished pictures in two minutes! No dark room—No expensive films or plates. In order to make our new cameras known in every locality, we shall sell them at half price for a short time only. Write at once for full information.
Gordon Camera Co., 1556 Stuyvesant Bldg., N. Y.

MONEY IN BOAT LIVERY!

Can ship in any quantity. Need No Boat House. Never Leak, Rust, Check, Crack or Rot. Absolutely safe. Every boat has water-tight compartments, so cannot sink. 20 different designs. Write TODAY for FREE illustrated Catalog and Special Factory Prices.
Michigan Boat Co., 148 Bellevue Av., Detroit, M.

AGENTS AND SALESMEN

PHOTOS DIRECT ON POST CARDS

No plates, films, printing, or dark room necessary. Start yourself in this bi quick-paying business. Tremendous opportunities. All or spare time. A dress either office of THE CHICAGO FERROTYPE CO., 601 Ferroty Bldg., Chicago, Ill., or 601 Public Bank Bldg., New York, N. Y.

AGENTS WONDERFUL OPPORTUNITY — ACT QUIC
Sell "AMBREW" CONCENTRATED BEER EXTRACT. Makes genui beer by adding water. Strictly legal. Enormous profits. Large sales. *Se postal today and we'll show you how to make money quick.*
The Ambrew Company, Dept. 1675, Cincinnati, Oh

WANTED. Anyone who has ever sold books typewriters, insurance, Colliers, mining stocks, o anything else, to write me and learn how he ca make $100 a month without making any invest ment but his time.
JOHN W. TALBOT, SOUTH BEND, IND

BIG MONEY—SMALL INVESTMENT

working picnics, fairs, from house to house o at home—out of doors or indoors—anywher making four finished pictures a minute of an subject. No plates, films or printing—finish wha you take where you take it. Investigate—writ today for catalogue just issued.
Daydark Specialty Co.
722 Daydark Bldg., St. Louis, M

MOVING PICTURE BUSINESS

Small capital starts you. Fortunes are bein made. We'll show you how. Write us for fu information.
Capital Merchandise Co.
Room 260, 440 S. Dearborn St., Chicago, Il

MALE HELP WANTED

WANTED. Organizers to solicit members an organize lodges.
ORDER OF OWLS, SOUTH BEND, IND.

MISCELLANEOUS

AUTOMATIC COMBINATION TOOL LIFT

or pulls 3 tons, is a wire stretcher and splice post and stump puller, vise, clamp, wrench, cid press, etc. Patented automatic features make work *easier* and *quicker*. Saves cost of eleve tools. 10 days FREE trial. Write today fc booklet.
Automatic Jack Co., Box 170, Bloomsfield, In

RIEGER'S FLOWER DROPS. You have neve seen anything like this before. The fragrance thousands of blossoms in a vial 2 inches hig The most exquisite perfume science ever pr duced. Not diluted with alcohol. $1.50 at deale or by mail. Send check, stamps or money orde 3 odors: Lily of the Valley, Rose, Violet. Mon back if not pleased. Send 20c. silver or stam for miniature bottle with long glass stoppe Please mention name of dealer. Address toda
PAUL RIEGER, 151 1st St., SAN FRANCISC

CONTENTS FOR AUGUST 1913

A Man and His Gun
Ethel Sabin Phillips

The Curse That Fell on Finnegan
Paul Reynold

The Interposition of Chink
Harry A. P. Stansbury

The Mother of Invention
Rex T. Stout

A Slip in the Path
A. M. Barnes

By Whatever Name
Frank H. Shoemaker

A Braver Man
Harold de Polo

Vol. XVIII., No. 11. Whole No. 215. Copyright, 1913, by The Shortstory Publishing Co.

WHY NOT BE AN ARTIST?

STUDY drawing at home under Expert Faculty. We have successful students in every part of the world. **Turn your Talent into money.** *Our Students are filling high salaried positions.* 14 years successful teaching. Endorsed by high authorities. 18 Courses in Commercial and Illustrative Drawing. Teachers' Normal and Applied Art. Profit or Culture.

Thoroughly Equipped Residence School

Artist's Outfit FREE to Enroled Students

OUR HANDSOME ART YEAR BOOK IS FREE TO YOU

SCHOOL OF APPLIED ART, 761 Applied Art Bldg., Battle Creek, Mich.

PLOTS WANTED FOR Motion Picture **PLAYS**

You can write them. Manufacturers now paying $25 to $100 for each plot. We teach you how to write and sell them. No previous experience necessary. Write now for free details.

ESS'D MOTION PICTURE SCHOOLS, 674 C Sheridan Road, Chicago

Write Moving Picture Plays

10 to $100 each. Constant demand. Devote all or spare time. Previous experience, literary ability or correspondence course unnecessary. *Details free.*

ATLAS PUBLISHING CO., - 332 Atlas Bank Building, - Cincinnati, Ohio

DO YOU WANT CASH

For your MSS.? FISHER'S FRATERNITY OF FABRICATORS will help you. *Write for booklet.*

F. O. FISHER, - - 2067 Bush Street, - - San Francisco, Cal.

MAKE MONEY WRITING STORY-WRITING TAUGHT BY MAIL

MSS. criticised, revised, and typed; also, sold on commission. Big story contest. Free booklet, "WRITING FOR PROFIT," tells how, gives proof.

Dept. 68, National Press Ass'n, Indianapolis, Ind

THE WRITER'S MAGAZINE

A Journal of Information for Literary Workers

Helps you Write Re-write and Sell

Short Stories, Serials, Books, Special Articles, Poems, Songs, Dramas, Vaudeville Sketches, Photoplays

KEEPS YOU IN CONSTANT TOUCH WITH THE MARKETS

No writer can afford to be without a copy on his desk

Send 15 cts. for a Sample Copy and see

THE WRITER'S MAGAZINE

52 Union Square, East - - New York City

We Have Paid Thousands of Dollars TO AMATEUR SONG WRITERS. You may be able to write a steady seller and share in future profits. Send us your poems or melodies for only *Original* square deal offer. Acceptance guaranteed if available by *Largest, Most Successful, Music Publishers* of the kind.

SONG POEMS WANTED

We arrange music, publish, advertise, secure copyright in your name and pay you 50 per cent of profits if successful. Hundreds of testimonials from song writers. Don't delay—write today for subscription to our *big* Song Writer's Magazine—valuable illustrated book on song writing and examination of your work *free.*

Dugdale Co., 173 Dugdale Bldg., Washington, D. C.

IF YOU ARE A WRITER

We can aid you to find a market

MSS. SUCCESSFULLY PLACED

Criticised, Revised, Typewritten. Send for leaflet E.

References: Edwin Markham and others. Established 1890.

UNITED LITERARY PRESS 123 5th AVE. NEW YORK.

AS A WRITER

You will find THE EDITOR, now in its 19th year, a twice-monthly stimulus to the production and sale of more and better manuscripts. Besides articles by writers and editors and answers to questions of vital importance to writers, each number contains news of the opportunities offered to writers to dispose of all kinds of manuscripts.

Jack London says, "THE EDITOR taught me how to solve the stamp and land-lady problems."

Send 10 cents for copy of current number, or $1 50 for yearly subscription.

THE EDITOR, Box M, Ridgewood, N. J.

"1001 Places to Sell Manuscripts," 9th edition, lists 2802 markets for short stories, serials, poems, etc. Price $1.50, postpaid.

Prepare for College at Home

You can prepare for College or complete your high school work at home by our simplified correspondence methods. **Our courses meet all entrance requirements;** they are written by members of the faculties of Columbia, Cornell, Pennsylvania, Mass. Inst. of Technology, Illinois, Chicago, Michigan and other leading universities. The **American School** is one of the largest educational institutions in the world and employs no agents, solicitors or collectors. Write for special College Preparatory Booklet.

American School of Correspondence

5808 Drexel Avenue Chicago, U. S. A.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The Black Cat

A Monthly Magazine of Original Short Stories

Published at Salem, Mass.

Copyright, 1913, by The Shortstory Publishing Co. All rights reserved.

Vol. XVIII., No. 11
Whole No., 215

AUGUST, 1913

10 cents a copy
$1.00 a year

Entered at the Post-Office at Salem, Mass., as second-class matter.

THE BLACK CAT is devoted to original, unusual, fascinating stories — every number is complete in itself. It publishes no serials, translations, borrowings, or stealings. It pays nothing for the name or reputation of a writer, but the highest price on record for *stories that are stories*, and it pays not by length, but by strength. Manuscripts should be addressed to Editorial Dept., Salem, Mass., and must be accompanied by addressed and stamped envelope for return if unavailable. All MSS. are received and returned at their writers' risk.

CAUTION.—*The entire contents of* THE BLACK CAT *are protected by copyright, and publishers everywhere are cautioned against reproducing any of the matter, either wholly or in part.*

A Man and His Gun*

BY ETHEL SABIN PHILLIPS

THAT Reggie Van Alstyn and Sam Slocum still had their shoes and guns was due to the fact that Sam had been with the Crazy K outfit when Pedro El Grande had come across at Agua Prieta. Next to horseflesh nothing had been in such demand as guns, ammunition, and shoes.

Therefore, when Reggie and Sam had risen from their noonday meal to see the rebels approaching behind a cloud of dust, Sam had had just time enough to cache their most desirable possessions in a coyote hole behind the low butte on the flat top of which they had struck camp.

There were twelve rebels, and six prisoners, one of whom was an American, in the band. The captain was a rascally looking Mexican betraying a trace of Apache in his features. They had taken everything they could eat, drink, smoke or wear, leaving the remainder of the prairie schooner's contents, which greatly resembled the loot from a small department store, scattered promiscuously without and heterogeneously within the shining new wagon with its shining new wagon-sheet dazzling in the sun. This white shimmer had been the signal which had flashed its message to the rebels when they were yet many miles from the border.

This camp at Penasco Pass was centuries old, for here was the last waterhole for seventy miles if one were going over the pass.

*Copyright, 1913, by The Shortstory Publishing Company. Copyright secured in Great Britain. All rights reserved.

The waterhole lay at the east end of the butte; but the breeze was fresher on top. Rising from the butte, a narrow shaft of rock, which was slowly being buried by the shifting sands of the desert, still reared five feet and more of its smooth surface to the weather. It, too, was flat on top. From this rock the pass had taken its name and near this rock, in the shadow of the rifled wagon, Sam and Reggie now sat, considering their predicament.

Their horses, of course, had been taken. Not even this catastrophe had been able to efface the humor of the situation from Sam's mind, but to Reggie then as now, humor was an element entirely lacking.

They had retrieved their shoes, boots for Sam, their cartridge belts and guns. This accomplished, there was a dearth of occupation.

Reginald Van Alstyn, only son of a devoted mother, was spending a summer between terms, accumulating material for western stories and incidentally a more robust physique with which to complete his college work. If his mother considered the physical condition paramount and the literary aspirations incidental, Reggie did not know it, but Sam Slocum, who had been engaged as guide and companion for a wagon trip through Arizona, had been advised that adventures and haste were both to be avoided.

Reggie was a nice boy but apt to be fretful away from Fifth Avenue. It is doubtful if Sam could have been made fretful under any conditions so long had he lived in the great out of doors of the western country. This adventure with the rebel bandits, being in the nature of a surprise and unavoidable, was not Sam's responsibility but he now felt it incumbent upon himself to restore Reggie's sense of proportion lest the experience really do him harm. To Sam this meant, merely, that Reggie's sense of the ridiculous must be rescued from out a chaos of nerves.

"It bein' summer time is some lucky for us," Sam said, rolling an imaginary cigarette with restless fingers.

"Lucky! Well, I can't see it that way. That sun up there is like ten thousand fires; no wonder the gentleman from Arizona felt a draft in hell."

"Been winter time the greasers might a wanted our underclothes too. That would a been mighty shockin' to the modesty of the female population of this ere bunch of jackrabbits an' coyotes, the privacy of whose home life we're kinda buttin' in on," Sam explained gravely.

"Oh Hades!" in disgust. "This is no time to joke. How are we going to get out of this anyway?"

"Well, it's seventy miles to water across—an' no ladies. It's twenty-five miles to water east—an' four women on the job. It's thirty miles to water west—an' th' ol' lady keeps boarders, mostly females."

"It's about as bad a fix as a man could get into, isn't it?" Reggie was disconsolate.

"Not on your life. I'd a heap rather be sittin' here right now with no sign of the makin's," again he rolled an imaginary cigarette with a wistful pucker about the lips, "than to be that American prisoner them greasers had. He wasn't a young man either, an' he's likely bein' treated mighty rough. I'm not feelin' easy in my mind about lettin' 'em get off again with him, but I figured that if we started anything, like as not we couldn't finish it—just us two against them twelve an' one of us a tenderfoot."

"Tenderfoot all right, maybe, but I can't see that that should hinder my handling a gun as well as the next man that's used to it." Reggie spoke with some heat.

"Sure thing, kid, but the two of us with our guns still on us an' a chance to round up a posse an' light out after the dirty devils, is likely to do the ol' party more lastin' good than if we'd pulled off our shirts an' jumped in. It went mighty hard to have to set still an' take anything off'n them, but I figured that was the quickest way to it."

"And this posse you are going to organize. I don't just exactly see where the material is coming from." Reggie was sarcastic.

"Well, I ain't aimin' to take anything that's in sight right now," Sam drawled. "Neither am I aimin' to set here all day. Clothes or no clothes, women or no women, I'm agoin' to get out of this mighty *pronto*. Say," Sam raised a silencing hand, "I hear a horse acomin' this minute." Like a flash he rolled over on his stomach and peered under the wagon and along the trail to the east. "Jumping Jehosophat! Man, here comes a girl."

"Lord, can't we hide in the wagon?" Reggie was in a panic.

"*Nada*. She'll see us. 'Rock of ages, cleft for me,'" he chanted as with Reggie in tow he sprinted for the narrow shaft of stone. Safely behind it but with no margin to spare, Reggie's chin just rested on the surface and Sam's head topped Reggie's by an inch or more.

A girl rode around the end of the wagon. Her clothes were

appropriate, therefore unnoticeable, all but the white silk handkerchief knotted about her throat and the wide hat well over her eyes. These, bearing an intimate relation to the exceptionally pretty face, aroused notice. She sat her saddle as one born to it and examined with a trained eye the ground trampled by the hoofs of many horses. Although puzzled and uneasy, she could not repress the smile which she bestowed upon the appurtenances of the camping wagon, the luxuriousness and newness of which it would have taken a regiment of rebel horses to entirely destroy. Glancing about in search of the tenderfoot who was guilty of this un-western display of household effects, the girl caught sight of Reggie's black head topped by Sam's blonde, sunburned locks, adorning the top of the rock.

She looked at them and they looked at her for a long moment, then Sam spoke. "Good evenin', ma'm." Sam's gravity was irreproachable and Reggie added, "Good afternoon," to which the girl responded with a murmer and a glimmering smile. The embarrassment of the situation grew upon the men, which the girl was not slow to perceive.

"Come on out, boys, I wouldn't hurt you for the world," she said, a rollicking lilt of amusement tripping the tone of her speech.

Considering this Reggie's party, Sam waited for him to reply, then realizing that speech was probably another attribute which Reggie lacked just at that moment he, himself, arose to the occasion.

"We'd like to accommodate you the worst way in the world, ma'm, but you see, if we did, like as not you'd think we was a full page ad for Porous Knit Underwear, just steppin' out of one of the weekly magazines." Had Sam announced the death of a near relative with the same tone and inflection he would still have been amusing. The girl started with a smile and ended with irresistible laughter. Even Reggie had to permit a relaxation of his facial muscles. This predicament being something which could never have happened on Fifth Avenue, was a catastrophe beyond all description to Reggie, and he hated to yield to the demands of a new and altogether surprising manifestation of his character, a manifestation entirely lacking in the usual culture of the Van Alstyns.

"Yes, ma'm, I reckon it's powerful funny to — to a girl — on the other side of the rock, but with this here sun abeatin' on a perforated surface—"

"The result of which will undoubtedly be a new pattern in polka dot effect—" Reggie had yielded and Rachel Winter's face was

buried in her handkerchief. Sam laid an approving hand on Reggie's shoulder and whispered, "You're on, kid. Keep it up."

"I beg your pardon," the girl said with subsiding laughter. "Of course you can't know how funny you look, but I will retire until you make yourselves more presentable. At this hour of the day it never occurred to me that I need hail the camp before entering it."

"Oh, don't go, please." Reggie recovered entirely from the first shock at the prospect of another. "We have'nt any more clothes, honest we haven't. There's no need of your going at all. In fact, I don't know that it is altogether safe. What do you think, Sam?"

"I reckon you'd better wait for us, ma'm," Sam agreed.

"My waiting will be rather indefinite, won't it, if you are going to remain behind that rock? By the way, what's happened here?" She swept a comprehensive glance about the place.

'Rebels—bandits—whatever you like to call 'em."

"What, on this side of the line! Wait till the border patrol gets hold of this!"

"Nothin' doin'," Sam said disgustedly. "I reckon the Johnnies can't help it, but I'll tell *you*, I've been ashamed of being named for Uncle Sam ever since he an' Mexico got to swappin' back talk. Uncle Sam needn't to risk no brass buttons. There's plenty of good fighters right along the border from Texas to the Pacific, that's just achin' to spank them greasers an' set 'em down hard."

"Rebels—rebels here!" Rachel spoke slowly. She had grown strangely tense and white. "I was on my way from Reed's Ranch to the Baxter place to meet my father, James Winter. I am Rachel Winter. He has been down to the mine in Sonora and is coming out because the rebels have it in for him. He armed his men and refused to be intimidated when they made their raid; that was over a month ago; he should be here tomorrow. I wonder what on earth the rebels can be doing here. Why, I've ridden this fifty miles alone, off-and on for months, and this is the first time I've ever even heard of the rebels coming over the border into this country."

For the first time Sam's face became grave. He knew now who the American prisoner was. He had seen Winter before, but not until he heard the name did he recall the man.

"A girl ride fifty mile in this God forsaken country!" Reggie exclaimed in his amazement.

"Certainly, and just as safe as if she were in—say New York, which, judging from your accent and your outfit, is where you hail

from." The asperity was natural in a girl raised in the mining countries and plains of the west.

"I beg your pardon," Reggie said with a formal dignity, which lost some of its forcefulness from the nature of things and which caused the girl to again slip the leash of her merriment.

"If somewhere in this junk I can find your sewing basket I can rig you up a couple of Roman togas in no time." Dismounting, she went swiftly to the wagon, where a ripple of laughter preceded her speech. "This looks like a girl's room, at boarding school, after a pillow fight."

"It's all his," Sam sang out. "His mother had him furnished and provisioned before she ever got her rope on me. I took him just like he was. I ain't been feelin' very cheerful lately an' I thought, maybe, travelin' with an outfit like this might keep me some tickled."

In less than an hour, for Sam hurried her, Rachel had completed a kimono-like costume for Sam, fashioned from two damask tablecloths. Why there should have been no sheets to serve a like purpose for Reggie, Rachel could not understand. Blankets were too hot, and all she could find in which to clothe Reginald Van Alstyn was an old shirt which had been used for cleaning lanterns and which bore grotesque designs of coal oil and lamp black upon its faded surface. This, however, being too short, was not satisfactory to the future wearer, and Rachel had added a towel or two, in straight flounce effect, about the bottom. When the costumes had, with much difficulty, been properly adjusted, Sam had plead for a bit of paper that he and Reggie might draw lots to see which one should first make his appearance in public.

Rachel kept her eyes persistently turned on the great, grim desert, dancing and shimmering under radiating heat waves, while the men came from their shelter and joined her where she sat on the hot sand. To her credit be it said that she never even smiled.

Sam dropped down beside Rachel but Reggie, distressfully conscious of his straight flounce, remained standing: a comical background for the two who had already begun to plan a way out of their predicament.

"The greasers went west; we'll kinda keep an eye on their trail. No danger of comin' onto 'm unless they make camp somewheres."

"They're not likely to do that; at least not along the road, and there's no water in any of these cañons."

Sam nodded and rose.

"Reckon we won't get very far before that hits us any way; maybe we'd better not start."

Rachel followed Sam's glance. The resignation that came into her eyes in no way altered the determination of her expression.

"Before what hits us?" Reggie inquired, glancing about the uninhabited spaces of their surroundings.

"That!" Sam waved towards the desert.

"Sand storm." Rachel's brevity was more explanatory. Reggie glanced unappreciatively at the dust-colored clouds that lay at the far edges of the world; they meant nothing to him.

Sam's certainty of the whereabouts of Rachel's father urged him to action despite the obliterated mountains on the horizon. He warned Reggie to say nothing of the American seen in the morning, although he himself gave as his reason for defying the coming wind, the fact that the rebels had had prisoners with them, and, "some of the boys were Americans." Rachel suspected nothing; her eagerness to be started was simply the spirit which moved the country in regard to Americans in the hands of bandits.

The girl riding, the two men walking, for Reggie had resisted every effort to make him take turn-about on the horse, they proceeded westward while yet the sun made merciless the desert. Water they carried but there was no food with the exception of sweet chocolate which Rachel had had in her saddle bags. Sam had tied a couple of blankets on the back of the saddle, knowing the night would be cold and neither of his charges were used to exposure. For himself he made no provision.

They had traveled a little less than seven miles over the splendid gravel road which skirted the foothills, when the storm swept upon them. For some time they had heard its roaring, like the voice of a sullen beast. Its note to experienced ears spoke of velocity of wind beyond that of the ordinary sand storm. There was no preliminary breeze; the wind struck like the sudden slap of a board upon them, sweeping the earth into the heavens and the heavens into limitless space. The three veered before its fury, drifting from the road towards the mountains. No one was riding now. Even the ground was insecure beneath their feet. Rachel, thrown from the wind's balance by the thrashing of her riding skirt about her knees, sought shelter beside her horse, grasping the stirrup for support. In this fashion they traveled, headed but half into the wind, their eyes blinded by the cutting sand which whipped into their faces like bits of broken glass and gritted dryly between set

teeth. The gloom of the storm deepened into dusk. The horse showed a determined inclination to lie down behind a sheltering mesquite bush and Sam had suggested taking refuge until morning in a cañon, when there loomed in the murk of lowering night and storm, the form of a man. He was kneeling on the sand not forty feet away. One hand hovered above, but never touched, a deep gash in his forehead and he muttered incessantly. Sam did not at first perceive the condition of the man, when he advanced alone, a ready hand lurking in the vicinity of his gun belt, a hand extended in swift aid when he saw that the man was James Winter.

Quickly Rachel was upon the ground beside him; swiftly she and Sam lifted him to the saddle where he lay upon his stomach, Sam supporting the gray head upon his shoulder as Rachel, leading the horse, turned with the wind and headed for the shelter of the mountains.

Reggie was not one of the party. In fact, he had slipped into the gloom before Sam realized that he was gone, and it took not many rods to completely hide him in the half-light which prevailed. Although Reggie was Sam's legal responsibility, Sam abandoned him without comment, and stumbled on under his lurching burden, hoping to high heaven that Reggie had stowed the gun which he had drawn at the first glimpse of Winter.

Take shelter, indeed, with rebels at hand. Nothing so peaceful as that entered the cultured pate of Reggie Van Alstyn. His guide and guardian lost to view, he struggled valiantly upon his combative enterprise, nor was he destined to search far. Almost too soon, he discerned the dim outline of a crouching something behind a creosote bush—a dead easy shot. Taking careful aim, nevertheless, Reggie fired. There was no outcry, no effort to escape, and no movement now. Plainly, Reggie had got his man. He dropped upon his knees and crept on. Within a hundred feet, brush sheltered another moving figure, possibly there were two; outlines were too vague to distinguish. Reggie fired on the instant and again before the second man could possibly draw a gun. Reggie was a crack shot and knew it and was therefore moved to no surprise when the shadows settled heavily and lay still.

If he could just get enough of them they'd give up the fight all right. They were known to be less quick on the trigger than on retreat. But it was just as well to proceed, as he was, below the usual line of fire.

"Dog-gone that greenhorn, any way," Sam panted at the first

shot. "What did he want to let them greasers know he was onto 'em for?"

Out of the chaos of swirling sand there came ten shots. They were fired from six-shooters, and there was no way of telling how many were for the defense and how many for the lone aggressor. Sam had visions of Reggie lying out there under the whipping sand with face turned towards the truant skies, the magic blue of which he would never see again.

When Sam had done what he could with water and blankets for the comfort of Rachel and her father, he left them. Bending double before the wind, he headed into it with every faculty concentrated upon the effort to judge the distance he must go before angling off towards the west to the vicinity where he had found Winter and lost Reggie. It was now too dark to see. Had he met a man, impact with his body would have been the first warning; but he met no one. For hours he groped about on the sand in a hopeless search. There was nothing to tell him that he was at least two miles from the place he sought. When, eventually, he gave it up, more hours were spent in his effort to locate the cañon. Rachel and her father were both asleep when he arrived. Seeking shelter beside the horse, he too soon slept, but with a sense of impending disaster still invading his consciousness.

At dawn he opened his eyes upon a serene sky. Rachel stood within the line of his vision, and despite her anxiety, for she saw that Reggie had not been found and her father's mind still wandered, she smiled when Sam rose, for the Roman toga of her fashioning hung in brown ribbons about the porous-knit-clad knees of the frontiersman.

Sam dusted his face by way of making a morning toilet and voiced his intention of going in immediate search of Reggie.

"I will go with you," Rachel said. "Father is asleep and I—I just can't sit here waiting for you to come back again—alone."

Sam would have preferred not to have been accompanied, but no one could have withstood the wistful appeal in the girl's face. Quickly they covered the distance which the night before had seemed such a labyrinth of nothingness. When Sam caught sight of a man lying on his face under a bush, he placed a restraining hand upon the girl's arm, but she would not be held back. In a very few moments Sam perceived signs of normal breathing beneath the faded shirt with its frescoes lampblacked and its trailing patterns done in oil.

"He's all right!" Sam ejaculated with relief, "but what in h—thunder's that?"

Lying by a mesquite bush, a dead burro was already beneath the shadow of a buzzard's wings. Sam looked aloft. Dozens of buzzards, widely scattered, drifted against the blue. Locating their several points of congregation, Sam, followed by Rachel, mounted a nearby hummock of sand and bunch grass and looked about the sparsely brushed spaces of the desert. Slowly a smile crept into his eyes and about his lips, and a low chuckle startled the girl. Rachel, with anticipatory tears already in her eyes and well on their way to spilling before Reggie had been seen to breath, was in no mood for laughter.

"Six on 'em!" Sam exclaimed. "They was only seven more in the herd. Lucky for them it got dark so quick. Reggie is sure some keen when it comes to a gun. Six of them poor little beggars sent to Kingdom Come and every bullet meant for the bloody heart of one of the dirty greasers."

Sam's chuckle enlarged itself into a laugh, interrupted occasionally by the reverent tones of an exclamation. "Six on 'em. Well, I'll be dog-goned!"

Reggie roused reluctantly from sleep, then suddenly remembering the dead men who were undoubtedly still his close neighbors, he arose, a proud hand upon the butt of his six-shooter. The prideful gleam in his eyes faded slowly beneath a look of growing consternation; an alarming redness crept well into his scalp when, with entire comprehension, he finally surveyed the battle field.

Rachel, whose melancholy had been routed by Reggie's astonishment and the loss of his straight flounce, made a frantic excursion among mysterious folds, after a handkerchief which eluded her search. She turned to Sam in her extremity, and dropping her face against him sobbed and laughed in relief and merriment upon the bosom of Reggie Van Alstyn's damask tablecloths.

The Curse That Fell on Finnegan*

BY PAUL REYNOLD

O, Finnegan, I've not seen Little Tim nor had word of him from anyone for years. Yes, if I should ever hear I'll let you know. You'll be going with us to the Los Angeles job when we're through here, won't you? You might find him there."

"Well, wan av the boys that just come from Frisco was workin' on a job wid some wan that might be Little Tim. I described 'im and he said it must be 'im sure enough. I would be leavin' for Frisco tomorrow but he remembered afterward this man had red hair. Little Tim had black, ye know.

"Another told me today av a little man he seen on a job in Los Angeles that was particular about workin' wid the same tools. Yes, I'll be goin' there next wid ye. Maybe it'll be 'im," added the gigantic iron-worker hopefully. A peculiar gleam of anticipation and desire lighted his heavy face.

"All right, Finnegan, I'll count on you to stay here till we've finished and then go with me there. It's as likely he's there as any place for there's a lot of work going up," said the foreman encouragingly.

Finnegan shifted his huge bulk from one foot to the other and awkwardly clenched and unclenched his sinewy, gorilla-like hands. He stared across our table at the wall beyond with a glazed, far-away look in his eyes.

" 'Tis six years I've looked, but I'll be findin' 'im some time," he said, more to reassure himself than to enlighten us, it seemed. He walked back to the bar and buttonholed a newcomer with inquiries about one Little Tim O'Hara, "a short little man, wid black hair, and if ye iver worked on the same job wid 'im ye'd be noticin' that he'd always be particular for usin' the same tools each day."

"No, Finnegan is not drunk—not yet," said the foreman. "But it's the same with him about Little Tim whether he's drunk or sober. He's asked me that same question every day for years."

"And this Little Tim?"

*Copyright, 1913, by The Shortstory Publishing Company. Copyright secured in Great Britain. All rights reserved.

"Little Tim," said the foreman, setting his empty glass on the table, "was Finnegan's partner. I don't know for how long they'd been together but they were like brothers—no, more than brothers, for brothers will quarrel with each other. For the three years I knew them, before Little Tim saved Finnegan's life, they worked together, drank together, fought for each other, and always without question shared everything they had.

"Why, one night after we'd been paid off, I saw Little Tim walk in from the back rooms where he'd put all his own money against a game, ask Finnegan for his roll, count it, take half, and walk back to the game without a word. And Finnegan goes right on talking and drinking at the bar without batting an eye any more than if he was a national bank and Little Tim was the cashier. Pretty soon in comes Little Tim, splits the roll again, and walks out. Four times he did that and the fifth time Finnegan was broke. Little Tim borrowed fifty cents of me, bought Finnegan a drink, and then they went home.

"And I've seen it the other way about, when Finnegan spent Little Tim's roll. Come to think about it, the odds were probably in favor of Finnegan for as a rule he got drunk the soonest and spent the fastest.

"Well, that's the way it always was till the time Little Tim saved Finnegan's life. Finnegan saw him but once after that day. It was in the hospital. Finnegan's always been looking for his partner since then—but I hardly think he'll find him."

The foreman paused and looked at his empty glass. I hastily brought another bottle. "You say Little Tim saved his life?" I ventured.

The foreman smiled indulgently at my eagerness to hasten the story. He refilled his glass with tantalizing deliberation, drank, and wiped his mouth thoughtfully on the back of his hand.

"It makes you weak and sick to look down from the top of a tower or any high place, even when you're standing on a floor and have a solid iron railing in front of you to hold you in?"

I admitted my weakness with a nod and a suggestive shudder.

"Suppose then, you'd all of a sudden find yourself on a narrow beam fifteen stories above the pavement with nothing anywhere about you to hold on to, and a good brisk wind blowing, too, and you'd look down at the street below. How do you think you'd feel?"

I shuddered in real earnest this time. "It makes me dizzy even to think of it."

"You've noticed the boys on the job running about up there on the

framework like spiders on a web and taking all sorts of fool chances with no more thought than if they had both feet on the ground. It's strange, but when one of those men you'd think knows no fear at all, does break, he goes to pieces all at once.

"It's seldom they get them loose and bring them down alive when they're in a bad place. Most often they cramp to death, tight against the beam or girder they're on when the fear hits them. It's hard work to pry them loose even after they're dead. And when one of them is brought down alive after the fear's been in his heart, you'll never get him above the ground again with any persuasion less than dynamite, no matter how reckless he was before or how high he was when the fear hit him. It may strike a man when he's working on the fourth or fifth story or it may get him in the sky, but he's never any good off the ground after that.

"I never saw but one man go up again after it had hit him, and he was down flat and cramped to the steel. That one was Finnegan. Little Tim got him loose and brought him down fifteen stories. I never expected he'd go up again but he's the best man I've got on the job today. But I guess the way Little Tim brought him down had a lot to do with his going up again.

"Finnegan had been wrong some way for several days. I'd noticed he was a little unsteady in his work and he was sullen and grouchy to everyone, except his partner, of course. The doctor said afterward it was the sickness already in him.

"Now Little Tim was a great hand to put some mark on a tool so he could use the same one each day. That morning he was complaining because he couldn't find a hammer he liked. Finnegan turned on him and snarled, 'Tim, ye fool, ye act like a baby. Where is one tool better than another if ye're man enough to use any at all?'

"It wouldn't have been much from anyone else but it surprised me coming from Finnegan to Little Tim. It was the first time I'd ever heard anything like that between them. Little Tim didn't say a word but he looked after his partner in a funny, puzzled way like he wasn't sure whether it was a joke or not.

"I was up above with them when the fear hit Finnegan. He started across a narrow, naked girder. It was the highest part of the building. Fifteen stories straight up from the street, it was. I saw him stop and look down. His face went white and wild, and his eyes bulged out. He just sort of oozed down and flattened out on the steel. The hammer he was carrying, he laid in front of him. I don't know how he did it or what movements he made going down; I guess I was watching his eyes all the time.

"There he was, muscles knotted, veins standing out, arms and legs welded round the steel like they were part of it, and the terror of death was in his eyes. I had crossed just ahead of him and started to slide down the upright beam that one end of the girder was fitted into. Little Tim was just below. I called to him and he looked up and saw. I ran out on the girder in front of Finnegan. He was staring straight down.

" 'What's the matter, Finnegan, old boy, a little sick? Come on, I'll help you down and you can get a drink of water and you'll feel better,' I said as easy and reassuring as I could, and I bent down and put my hand on his arm to try and get him started.

"Barring the time a cable broke and four ton of steel missed me about an inch, right then was the closest call I've had in my life. As quick as I touched that crazy Irishman he turned loose with his other arm and made a shove at me that pretty near sent me off.

" 'Don't ye touch me,' he says in a kind of a wheeze, like his throat was all dried out, and he flashed his arm back quick as a snake and gripped the girder with it again. I could see him wriggle all over as he tried to mash his body closer to the steel.

"I was backed out of reach, you bet. Little Tim behind me called. I went back. He was at the top of the beam.

" 'Crawl around me, Kelly, and down,' he says, 'so I can go out. I'll bring 'im.'

" 'Look out, Tim. He's crazy from the fear,' I says. 'He most did for me.'

" 'I saw 'im,' he says.

"I slid to the next floor and looked up. For half a minute, before it come to me what Little Tim was up to, I thought there were two crazy men up there instead of one. Little Tim walked out in front of Finnegan as easy as you please.

" 'Finnegan!' he says sharp like, so that Finnegan turns his eyes away from below and looks up at him. 'I want to use yer hammer a little. Some wan has stole mine, ye know, and the one I brought up today is no good. The handle in 'er is crooked.'

"With that, Little Tim reaches down and picks up Finnegan's hammer in one hand and looks off easy at the sky, like he might be speculating on the weather. With the other hand he pulls out a plug of tobacco and takes a chew. Finnegan hadn't said a word but he kept his eyes straight on Little Tim in a kind of dumb agony. I don't know why, but his eyes made me think right then about once when I was a boy and I saw a cow lying on the ground with both hind legs broken.

"Little Tim looked no more concerned than if his partner was sitting in a rocking chair reading a newspaper. He took a careful survey of the weather, put his plug back, and looked down at Finnegan.

" 'I'll be through wid yer hammer and bring it back to ye shortly,' he says. Then he hefts the hammer up and down a couple times and swings her a little.

" 'That's a good hammer,' he says. 'She feels to me hand just like the wan I lost—that some blackguard stole.'

"With that, he half turns away but stops and looks hard at the handle. 'Well, I'm a son-av-a-gun!' he says surprised like. Then he turns straight on his partner.

" 'Finnegan, ye filthy, low-down scum av the earth, ye Dago,' he says, 'I've lived wid ye for years and niver yet have I quarreled wid ye, but I thought ye were a man. All the time I thought ye were a man, instid av what I now know ye to be: a blankety blank—' and here Little Tim explodes a fine collection of evil names.

" 'To think ye would do a dirty trick like that, what even a nayger would be ashamed to do. To steal me hammer and cut me marks off and put some av yer own over thim. As for the hammer, I do not care. If ye'd come and asked me for it I'd have give it to ye. Did I iver hold anything back on ye when ye asked me? I've been yer partner for years, but now I'm done wid ye. Done for good. Did ye hear me?'

"With that, he stops and waits for an answer. Finnegan hadn't taken his eyes off him since he'd first looked up. And without knowing it he had loosened and was up on his knees, leaning forward with his hands gripping the sides of the girder. His face was blood-red.

" 'Tim,' he says, 'Tim, ye are wrong. Look at the hammer agin. Ye are mistaken. 'Tis the same hammer I've used ivery day for the month. Look at it agin, Tim. Ye'll see 'tis not yer own, and ye'll take back what ye said.'

"Tim looked at the handle again. 'Not me own hammer?' he yelled. 'And ye would even try to lie out av it, ye coward, whin I can still see me own marks ye didn't scrape clear out? Take back what I said? Niver! Come below wid me and I will prove by ivery man on the job 'tis mine and ye are a liar. Come down. I defy ye. I can show ye me own marks on it yet. Come down below, ye blackguard, and I'll not only prove 'tis me own hammer ye've stole, but I'll make ye eat it, ye coward, for all yer size.'

"Finnegan was straight up on his feet. He took a step forward.

Right then I thought it was all over. For Finnegan looked down. A flash of the fear shot into his face again and he wavered. I shut my eyes. At that instant little Tim played his high cards. He called Finnegan a string of vile names that reflected on his parentage and personal characteristics, for any one of which, most men will kill. It was by far the finest display of filthy and insulting language I've ever heard, and I've heard some of the best in my time.

"That did the business. Finnegan dragged his eyes away from below. His white face was pure, undiluted murder. He reeled the rest of the way across the girder like a drunken man. Little Tim had backed away ahead of him and slid down the beam. He never let up on his curses and insults, but when he looked back over his shoulder at Finnegan sliding down the beam, the little devil grinned across at me and winked.

" 'Come on, ye cowardly, sneakin' thief,' he yelled, waving the hammer at Finnegan. 'I can show ye me own marks right here on the handle.'

" 'To hell wid the hammer, Tim O'Hara. Whether 'tis yours or mine, I'll kill ye for what ye've said. I'll tear yer heart out wid me two hands,' wheezed Finnegan in the same hoarse, dried-out voice he'd used when he'd ordered me not to touch him.

"Down they went for five stories, Little Tim keeping just so far ahead all the time and never letting up on his words, and Finnegan, white-faced, staggering, and crawling after him as if he was hypnotized. Finnegan began to move faster and when they got to the tenth floor he let out a yell and started after Little Tim on the run. Little Tim was hard put for the next two stories to keep ahead, and at the eighth floor he laid down the hammer, swung out on a steel cable, and slid to the ground.

"Finnegan snatched up the hammer, leaned out and threw it down at him, and then swung out on the cable and started down. The hammer missed Little Tim by inches. When he hit the ground he started to run. Thirty feet from the ground, Finnegan, coming down the cable, let out a yell like a wild beast, swung out, let go and flew through the air all spraddled out, trying to light on Little Tim as he came down. He missed.

"Lucky enough for Finnegan, Little Tim had crossed over and slid down on the side next a vacant lot. Finnegan was that crazy I'll bet he'd have jumped even if there had been pavement below. Little Tim ran for his life, Finnegan chasing him with an iron bar he'd picked up. Somebody tripped Finnegan and about a dozen of the boys sat on him. All of a sudden he collapsed. They hauled him

to the hospital. He was delirious with the fever for more than a month.

"Little Tim was quite a hero. But he worried a lot because he knew that a man who has once been down with the fear, as Finnegan had been, never goes up again. 'Still,' he says to me, 'Finnegan can get a job of some kind down below and we can be together nights. For that matter, he won't need to get a job at all if he don't strike something agreeable to him. I'm makin' enough for two of us to get along on fine.'

"It was a great day for Little Tim when they said at the hospital that Finnegan could see visitors. He bought himself a necktie and a new coat for the occasion. And nothing would do but he must take Finnegan a bottle of his favorite whiskey. I told him the doctor wouldn't let Finnegan have it.

" 'Well, he can have it set by his bed to look at till he gets well,' says Tim. So the bartender got him out a fancy bottle like they use for Christmas time, and Little Tim went up to the hospital to surprise his partner. And from what I heard afterward, it was a surprise all right.

"When Finnegan saw Little Tim come in the door he tore out of bed, grabbed a chair, jumped over the sick man in the next bed, and started after his partner. Little Tim slammed the door just as Finnegan let fly with the chair. Two chair legs went through the panel of the door. It took three doctors and a dozen nurses to get Finnegan back in bed. He had a relapse and they had him strapped down for two weeks.

"When they were ready to let him out of the hospital, I had Little Tim go out of town on another job. I tried to explain to Finnegan, but would you believe it, he doesn't remember a thing of the fear that was on him. Swears he was never down at all but was standing straight up, taking a chew of tobacco, when Little Tim came up and started the quarrel about the hammer. 'And no man can call me thim names and live,' he says.

"When he got his strength back, he went up again just the same as ever and he takes more chances now than any man on the job. I tried for weeks—all the boys tried—to get it into his head how Little Tim had saved his life. But I'm afraid we never made much of ar impression on him. You'll see.

"Finnegan," called the foreman. The red-headed giant approached us. "You were asking about Little Tim O'Hara. What did you want to see him about, Finnegan?"

Finnegan's bloodcast eyes flared, he drew in his breath with an

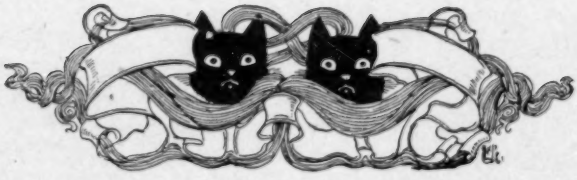
eager, whistling sound, and leaned forward with his big, hairy hands on the edges of the table.

"Find 'im for me, Kelly—and see."

The hands clenched and his frame stiffened. The solid little table, with the marks of many a barroom brawl on it, trembled; the wood cracked and splintered in Finnegan's hands.

"No, I don't believe I'd care to see a reunion," I responded to the foreman's question, as I looked at the splintered table and thought of those hands and of what I had seen in Finnegan's face. "I don't believe I'd care to see."

"No, neither would I. That's why the new man remembered that the fellow he'd seen in Frisco had red hair. And that's why one of the other boys has seen a man in Los Angeles that fits Little Tim's description. That's why I'll be writing Little Tim tonight that he'd best be getting a job in the east. We'll be done here in a week, and some way Los Angeles seems too close to Frisco."



The Interposition of Chink*

BY MARY A. P. STANSBURY

HE mountain-side lay basking in the summer-afternoon sunshine. Seen from the opposite height, it might have seemed no more than a wilderness of beech and pine with an open space here and there overgrown with laurel and althea bushes or all a-tangle with fruit-bearing brambles and odorous wild grapes. But to one who essayed to climb, the riotous greenery was cleft by a narrow, winding bridle-path which supplied the intimate touch of human occupation.

The familiar suggestion was suddenly embodied in the tall figure of a young mountaineer who, stepping noiselessly as an Indian, appeared, rifle in hand, at a fork of the trail. He wore a loosely fitting suit of homespun, with the collar of the heavy shirt rolled back from his strong, brown throat; and beneath his broad-brimmed straw hat a pair of dark, determined eyes gazed upward along the zig-zag path.

"I expect I'm due to wait a spell," he said to himself, "an' it'll be as cheap to set down as stand up."

Suiting the action to the word he settled himself comfortably upon a moss-grown log on the edge of the thicket, close to where a little spring bubbled up amidst sweet-smelling mint and fern. The young man stooped, dexterously catching the clear water in the cup of his palm and drinking deeply of the cool draught. In the unconsciousness of his solitude his face grew eloquent with some happy anticipation.

From the low soughing of the pines and the myriad small noises of the forest, a faint sound of singing detached itself.

The boy shrank behind the screen of a pine-trunk.

"That's her! That's Jinny!" he whispered. "She'll be plum s'prised to find me here!"

The singing grew momentarily more distinct. Soon it was pos-

* Copyright, 1913, by The Shortstory Publishing Company. Copyright secured in Great Britain. All rights reserved.

sible to distinguish the words set to a quaint, crooning melody:

"I've been gatherin' flowers in the meadow
To wreathe around your head,
But, so long you've kept me a-waitin',
They're all withered and dead."

The low, final note in a rich contralto voice, rang like the stroke of a distant bell just as a girl rounded the curve, mounted on a hardy mountain-pony. No Derby favorite could have been more carefully groomed than the small creature under whose cautious hoofs the fallen twigs crackled and the thick carpet of pine needles exhaled an aromatic perfume. His coat had been brushed to a satin smoothness, and his heavy mane rippled in smooth waves about his shoulders, only the forelock braided and tied with a bit of some brilliant scarlet stuff.

The rider herself was of that delicate beauty not seldom the dower of the mountain-girl, but fading—alas!—too soon under the later burdens of poverty and monotonous labor. Her sunbonnet had fallen backward, disclosing the thick golden-brown braids wound about her small, shapely head, and the blue of her checked gown accentuated the violet tints of her large, beautiful eyes.

The young man sat perfectly still, but the pony, quicker of sense than his mistress, suddenly threw up his head with a snort.

"Yo' Chinkapin!" chided the girl. "What ails ye? Yo' act 's if yo'd seen a hant!"

The lad emerged into view.

"A solid one!" he laughed.

"Jake!"

"Yes, it's me, Jinny!"

"Yo' sure gave me a scare! I allowed Chink'd throw me over his haid. What yo' a-doin' hyar?"

"What yo' s'pose?"

He covered with his own the small, brown hand upon the bridle-rein.

"Waitin' for me, Jakey?" She spoke softly.

He nodded, smiling.

"How'd yo' know I'd be ridin' down mounting to-day?"

"Reckoned you-uns might be wantin' meal for Sunday."

"You're right, Jakey. Hyar's the bag layin' along o' Chink's shoulder. But I must be a-goin' on," she coquetted.

"No, yo' ain't a-goin' on! Yo're goin' to 'light right now an' set on the log with me for a spell."

His strong arms lifted her, laughing and protesting.

"Well, if yo' will be so brash," she yielded, "I s'pose I might let Chink crop awhile. There's a right smart clump o' grass down in the holler."

The boy and girl—they were scarcely more—sat down side by side.

"Don't tease me, Jinny!" he pleaded. "Say yo're glad I come!"

She turned to him with an impulsive gesture.

"I am glad, Jake, an' yo' know it. The sight of ye's light to my eyes. But I wish"—wistfully— "that we didn't hev' to meet unbeknownst this-a-way. I'm plum tired o' skulkin' in corners."

"So be I, Jinny," he answered soberly, "but we've just got to be patient. Things must come right afterwhile. It cain't be that two folks as care for one another like we do, should be kept apart all along o' suthin' as happened afore ary of us was born."

He slipped his arm around her and tenderly drew the brown head to his shoulder.

There was a sudden stir in the bushes and the lovers started apart none too soon, for, a moment later, a man appeared in the path carrying on his shoulder a child so surpassingly beautiful that his face seemed to make a spot of radiance in the shadow of the wood. Under his dark, perfectly modeled brows a pair of great brown eyes shone like stars and, although at an age when a boy's locks are usually cropped like those of his elders, a mass of long yellow curls fell like a cloak over his little checked blouse.

One glance at the features of the older man sufficed to define his relationship to the younger. Allowing for the difference in years, the one was a replica of the other. The boy had risen and for one long moment the two faced each other in silence, their glances clashing like swords. From the father's face a white heat of anger had driven every vestige of color; the strong lines might have been carved in stone. Yet in that cataclysmic moment he had not forgotten the child. Lifting the little fellow down from his perch with a slow gentleness, he said in even tones:

"Run away, Benjy, honey! See, over the aidge o' the hill. Pick a posy for pappy!" The child went obediently, though casting longing glances at the pony nibbling daintily at the fresh grass.

As the father turned, the son involuntarily laid a protecting hand upon his companion's arm.

"Well!" The man's tone was like the stab of a rapier.

There was no reply.

"What hev ye to say for yo'self?"

The lad stepped forward, squaring his strong shoulders.

"Pap," he said, "I ain't makin' no excuses, for I ain't done no wrong. If Jinny hyar an' I hev to see one another on the quiet, it's yo' as has druv us to it! We've waited hopin' yo'd come to look at things diff'rent, an' we're willin' to wait longer yit. But I ain't afeared to tell yo' to yer face that it's only waitin', not givin' up. We b'long to one another an' nuthin' or nobody's goin' to part us, certin' not some fool-quarrel that was atween our gran'thers. An' that's my last word!"

An expression of curious malignity distorted the father's features.

"Ef so be that's yer last word," he mocked, "then I'll say mine! Yer gran'ther an' yer gret-gran'ther are in their graves, but the quar'l atween the Varneys an' the Macys ain't daid. I allow it's been a-sleepin' till young upstarts like yo'self has nigh about forgot it, but—I tell yo' this—*yo'd better let sleepin' dogs lie!* Stir 'em up onst an' yo'll find their teeth in yer throat! Yo' needn't put the gal ahint ye,—I ain't makin' no war on wimmen, but I tell yo' an' her too, that if my son darst to marry a Macy, thar ain't a man-person o' that race, old or young, as 'll be safe from my gun! An' I ain't called no slouch of a shot nuther! Look thar!"

He pointed with his long finger at a squirrel nibbling a green nut on the top twig of one of the tallest beeches. He lifted his rifle, there was a sharp report, a tearing through the branches, a thud upon the ground, and, the little headless body lay bleeding almost at the girl's feet. Sick and faint she covered her eyes with her hand.

Startled by the explosion, the pony came trotting to his young mistress and, like a faithful dog, rubbed his velvet muzzle against her arm.

A little hand plucked at her skirt.

"Up! Up!" begged the child, who, leaving his flowers, had, unnoticed, joined the group.

Mechanically Jinny stooped to lift him to the pony's back. There was a rush like that of a wild animal and the father snatched the boy from her arms.

"Don't yo' darst tech 'im!" he hissed, and with his rough cowhide boot he planted a heavy kick upon the pony's flank. The gentle creature screamed with fright and pain. For an instant Jinny wreathed her arms around the satin neck and then turned upon her persecutor.

"Joe Varney," she said, "yo're a wicked, cruel man! Yo' might 'a' struck me an not the innocent creetur! But yo' needn't give yo'self

no more trouble about me. I love Jake. I love him like—" she hesitated—"like that vine thar loves the tree. I'll never stop lovin' him either in this world—or beyant! I won't marry no other man as long as I live. But I won't marry him! Nor I won't meet him—or talk to him—no mo'! This is my good-bye to him, an' I say it afore yo'. The Macys don't go whar they ain't wanted. I won't go to my own happiness trackin' blood over no man's doorstone! Come, Chink!"

The finality of the judgment day was in her voice. The two men gazed at her silently while, unaided, she mounted her trembling pony and turned his head along the downward trail.

Slowly Jake's burning eyes returned to his father.

"Pap," he said in a voice tightened almost to a whisper, "yo' kin do this—yo' who knows what love is—yo' as loved—Liss?"

"How dast yo'?"

The answer was a cry of mingled astonishment and pain. To have asked the question had been, indeed, for Jake a proof of supreme daring. To the inner self of the bronzed, reticent mountaineer the flower-like face of the girl-wife whom he had laid in her grave beside that of the faded, world-weary companion of his youth, was always present. His love for her had been the passion of an uncurbed nature. She looked at him still not only from the sun-touched fields of memory, but through the face, the eyes, the floating curls of the child for whose breath she had given her own—the little Benjamin of her sorrow, the child in whom centered all that was left him of the joy of life. Yet, never since the earth covered her, had he allowed her name to be spoken in his hearing. No mere defiance could have struck so deep a wound as this deliberate presumption of his son. It marked the parting of the ways. The lad had become a man.

Three months had passed, and September lay brooding over the hill-country. Through the open door of the Varney cabin came the low humming of a whirling wheel and the measured pad of footsteps —forward, back—forward, back—as Aunt Dely Varney, Joe's elderly sister and housekeeper, spun her "rolls" carded to a snowy fluff, into a thread whose even fineness was the constant despair of young imitators. Except for an occasional movement in the inner room, as of some one tossing restlessly upon a couch, there was no other sound in the house.

Outside, little Benjy played in the sun whose level light touched his golden hair as with an aureole. From the wood lot beyond the clearing rang the stout blows of Joe's axe wielded by arms from which the years had substracted nothing of their youthful strength and cunning.

At a little distance below the house there opened a cuplike hollow in the hills where the "branch," brawling down the mountain-side, had broadened into a lake, tiny in superficial extent but of a middle depth never yet measured by the plumb-line of the oldest inhabitant. It was a lovely bit of water, translucent as crystal, and opaline in its changing colors as the reflections of clouds and trees pursued each other over its rippling surface. Moored at the bank lay an old boat in which, his day's work done, Joe was wont to paddle about for the delectation of the child, who, since the alienation of his elder son, absorbed more and more all the currents of his life and thought.

Benjy's likeness to his mother grew with every day. The wonderful cloak of curls still fell about his shoulders, to the strong disapprobation of the neighbors to whom the rearing of a "girl-boy" was the last expression of parental folly. Once only Aunt Dely had tremblingly ventured to suggest the use of the shears, but her temerity met with so swift and sharp a rebuke that the offence was never repeated.

The peace of the scene, at once sylvan and domestic, was suddenly broken by a shrill, childish scream. Stricken with terror, Aunt Dely rushed to the door. The boat, loosed from its moorings and urged by the combined push of the breeze and the undertow of the current making toward the outlet, was drifting slowly but steadily from shore, while, perched perilously upon the thwart, a little, swaying figure stretched helpless hands in terrified appeal.

"Sit down, Benjy! Set down!" cried the old woman, but her words fell on heedless ears. Then, making a speaking tube of her hands, she called:

"Joe! Joe! Joe!"—while the echoes mocked her from the hill. . .

The piercing cry reached the ear of the woodsman, and, rushing to the brow of the cliff, the whole situation burned itself upon his brain. To leap down the precipice was impossible, and the descent by the round-about path was a matter of minutes. God in heaven! What might not happen in that interval!

Jumping, plunging, tripping and again recovering himself, he sprang into the open just as the child, staggering, threw his little arms above his head and fell over the side of the boat. A hoarse

groan of agony burst from the father's lips. Next moment he had a confused sense of something which passed him,—a medley of flying hoofs, a gleam of scarlet, the uncertain vision of a girl lying along the back of a galloping horse, the sound of a clear voice pitched to every note of endearment.

"Go, Chinky! Good fellow! Careful, boy! Don't stumble! Now! Chink—dearest—now!"

The little creature took the water without a balk. The bottom sloped rapidly beyond the feel of his hoofs; in a moment he was strongly swimming, while the girl drew up her hindering skirts. Beyond, a glint of yellow flamed for a moment in the mocking sunlight and disappeared! Once more it rose to the surface—the last time! But a girl's strong, young hand was twisted in the dripping golden fleece. Chink had won the race with the black charger, Death!

When the simple methods of resuscitation had been successfully employed and the boy lay conscious and faintly smiling in his father's arms, Jinny wrung her soaked petticoats and essayed to mount her shaking horse.

"Yo' cain't go that-a-way," expostulated Joe Varney, though he could not meet her eyes. "Come along in till Aunt Dely gits yo' some dry close an' a cup o' suthin' warmin'."

"No, thank ye, Mist' Varney. I never take cold. I'll be goin' now."

"But the creetur—he'd ought to be rubbed down."

"Oh! Chink'll be all right. He's been wet afore."

The man's face flushed under the tan. Suddenly he drew himself up.

"Did ye know Jake was home, Jinny?"

"No, Mist' Varney."

"I reckon yo've hearn tell as how he went down the 'branch' to work for Old Man Rapp after—you know when?"

There was no answer.

"Well, he's got hurted."

The girl's face whitened.

"Not to be scairt of," Varney hastened to explain. "Log rolled on his laig, but he's sure to be all right ag'in, Doc says. Only he cain't move himself for a spell. They fotched him home yistidday. He warn't no ways agreeable to comin', Jake warn't, but there didn't seem no other way. It's plum tough for Jake, and sort o' lonesome, too. I thunk mebbe you'd come in an' cheer 'im up a bit."

The girl steadied herself with a hand upon the pony's neck. Full in the face she gazed at the mountaineer. Neither spoke, but the two pairs of eyes questioned and answered.

"I'll go in," said Jinny.

As they stepped across the threshold a voice, weak and strained, spoke from the inner room.

"What's happened? What's all the screamin'? I couldn't even git to the winder. Lyin' hyar like a rat in a trap!" . . .

"Whatever 'twas, it's all done now," said Joe Varney, "an'—some other things too. I thunk ye might like a visitor, Jakey."

Jinny stood a moment outside the door, her hand pressed upon her heart to check its wild beating. Then she went in.

The face which turned toward her was gaunt and thin, and there were new lines in it strange for one so young. Jinny's woman-heart divined what had traced them there.

"Jinny!"

Straight to the couch she went and, kneeling on the floor beside it, gathered that dear face to her breast. She saw it whiten and the eyelids flutter.

"Jake, what is it?"

"Nuthin', Jinny." He spoke with effort. "Just a mite faint-like. I ain't quite strong, dear, an' I ain't been able to git much sleep. Don't try to tell me anythin' now. Just let me feel yo' here—that's enough."

But later, when the color had come back to his lips, he whispered:

"What's come to Pap? What ever did ye do, Jinny?"

The girl's lovely eyes were shining.

"I didn't do nuthin', Jake, dear. Yo' see when we-uns giv' up, Chink took a-holt!"

The Mother of Invention*

BY REX T. STOUT

ILLIAM Frederick Marston blew a cone of cigarette smoke thoughtfully into the air, sighed despairingly, and read the cablegram for the third time:

> Walk home tired of your foolishness not a cent
> *Jonathan Marston.*

"I suppose," said William Frederick aloud, "he thinks he's funny. And the first two words, which are entirely useless and perfectly offensive, cost him an extra half-dollar. The governor is getting extravagant."

He tossed his cigarette into a porcelain urn on the table, lit another, and crossing the room, seated himself in a chair by the window and gazed thoughtfully out at the throng in the street below.

The hour was half-past three in the afternoon; the street, the Rue Royale, Paris. Trim, speedy taxicabs, with their air of fussy importance, glided along the further curb; here and there an old fashioned cabriolet or hansom dodged helplessly about in the rush of the modern traffic. The pedestrians sauntered, strolled, trotted, paraded—did everything, in short, except walk. The chauffeurs and cab-drivers courteously exchanged scurrilous epithets, the *sergent-de ville* at the corner blew his whistle furiously, waving his his arms wildly in all directions, and barefooted gamins darted through the crowd, crying late evening editions of the newspapers. Over all was the soft radiance of the September sun.

But the humor and color of this animated scene was entirely lost upon William Frederick Marston. Perched high in the air on the horns of a dire dilemma, he was madly struggling in a desperate effort to regain a footing on solid earth.

For perhaps half an hour he remained sitting by the window, smoking many cigarettes and trying to think. But his situation was so fantastically horrible, so utterly unprecedented, that he found it impossible to shape his thoughts. There was no ground on which to

* Copyright, 1913, by The Shortstory Publishing Company. Copyright secured in Great Britain. All rights reserved.

build. The hypothesis being absurd, how could he be expected to arrive at a logical conclusion?

Suddenly he rose to his feet, thrust his hand into his vest pocket and drew forth three franc-pieces and one or two sous. For a moment he gazed at them mournfully, then returned them to his pocket, crossed to a wardrobe, took from it his hat and gloves, and left the room.

In fifteen minutes he returned, looking, if possible, more dejected than before. He entered the room with a slow, irresolute step, closing door behind him with exaggerated care. Depositing his hat and gloves on the table, he crossed the room and stood by the window. Again he thrust his hand into his vest pocket, and drew it forth. It contained three sous. Opening the window, he tossed them into the street below and smiled with tragic amusement as he saw three or four gamins dart towards them. Then, with a deep sounding sigh, he sank back in a chair by the window, muttering, "I—Billy Marston—to lose *three francs* at roulette! It is horrible."

It was, indeed; too, it was incredible. But alas! It was true. And now the three francs were gone, and William Frederick Marston began to think in earnest.

How it had come about he could scarcely have told. His recollection of the events of the three months previous was somewhat dimmed by their whirlwind rapidity and unusual and varied character. He had a faint memory of an affair of the heart *a la* Byron at Milan, a disgraceful though amusing experience among the beachcombers at Marseilles, and a disastrous hour of recklessness at Monte Carlo. He had mentioned none of these incidents in his letters to his father, Jonathan Marston, of New York, who had seen fit to send his son, William Frederick, on an educational tour of the Mediterranean during the summer vacation preceding his senior year at Harvard.

The tour of the Mediterranean had been abruptly halted by the misfortune at Monte Carlo. William Frederick had cabled to New York for additional funds and on receiving them he had departed for Paris. Struck by the beauty of that city, he had immediately decided to buy it, and discovered too late that he had squandered his last sou on a worthless option. The fall term at Harvard was to begin in two weeks. He cabled his father:

Leave for New York tomorrow wire funds. *William.*

That cablegram promptly brought the following answer:

Five hundred more you need a guardian. *Father.*

But by that time the lure of the City by the Seine had William Frederick in its deadly grasp. Three days later he sent another cablegram:

Funds disappeared wire quick sail tomorrow. *William.*

In a few hours came the following answer:

Passage on *Alvonia* sailing Cherbourg tenth paid here am sending twenty dollars for fare to Cherbourg. *Father.*

William Frederick, commenting indignantly on the folly and immorality of suspicious parents, obtained the twenty dollars and purchased a ticket for Cherbourg, whither he decided to betake himself the following morning. The ticket, however was but thirty francs. That evening he entered a certain gay and noisy apartment in the Montparnasse Quarter with fifty francs in his pocket, and came out with two thousand. On the following day, at the hour the Alvonia sailed from Cherbourg, he was walking in the Champs Elysées, ogling aristocratic carriages and trying to decide whether to spend the evening on the Mountain or at the Folies Bergère.

Three days later he sent the following cablegram, collect:

Missed steamer wire funds or arrange transportation. *William*

And it was in answer to this that he had received the unfeeling and sarcastic advice from his father to walk home. And William Frederick, being a wise son and therefore knowing his own father, was very well aware of the fact that what Jonathan Marston said, he meant.

He was, in fact, tired of Paris. He wanted to go home. The governor must know that. And the fall term at the University would commence in three days. He felt a sudden fierce yearning for knowledge. Was his father so unfeeling as to deny him the advantages of a decent education? Did he not realize the imperative necessity for one's attendance at one's preliminary lectures and recitations? Surely he must. Another cablegram would persuade him.

But no. Pride had something to say about that. Since his father had seen fit to refuse his reasonable request for money to come home, he would make no further appeal to *him*. Such an appeal, he told himself bitterly, would be useless anyway. Some other expedient must be found.

He had friends, or course—dozens of them. There were one or two whom he could trust utterly—Sackville Du Mont, for instance, or Tom Driscoll, of Philadelphia. But they, poor devils, could be of no use in a financial difficulty. And the others would talk. That would serve his father right—to have it known all over New York that the son of Jonathan Marston had been forced to depend on the assistance of friends to get home when an unforeseen shortage of funds had overtaken him during his travels in Europe. If his father showed no concern for the dignity of the Marston name, why should *he?*

But here, again, entered pride. And the pride of youth, when properly nourished and aroused is capable of magnificent sacrifices and supreme idiocies. It caused William Frederick to reject with scorn the idea of an appeal for money to his acquaintances; it caused him to regard the conduct of his father with increasing indignation and resentment; it caused him, finally, to resolve grandly that he would make his way home unaided and alone. Sublime resolution!

He proceeded immediately to the consideration of ways and means. The obvious and ordinary method he dismissed with contempt. It was all very well for common persons to peel potatoes or feed cattle for a passage across the Atlantic—indeed, Tom Driscoll had done it, and he thought none the less of him for it—but such a degradation could not even be thought of in the case of William Frederick Marston. It was a sheer impossibility. In fact, he regarded as absolutely necessary the luxuries and privileges of the first cabin. This greatly increased the difficulty of an otherwise simple task. He must use his wits.

He used them. A thousand schemes offered themselves to his mind, each to be rejected in its turn. As for earning the money for a passage, that was impossible. He had no ability that was marketable, even in that greatest and most varied of all markets—Paris. He realized it with a sense of amazement.

But there must be a way. He enlarged his scope of speculation. Stowaway? Bah! Take passage on a liner, pretend to have lost his ticket, and trust to Fortune and the name of Marston? But that would mean an appeal to his father, perhaps even a demand on him by the steamship company. Besides, there was the fare to Cherbourg, and incidentals. Appeal to Ambassador Halleck? But that, again, would mean an appeal to his father, though indirectly.

If he only possesed Tom Driscoll's experience and daring! Tom could do anything—and would. And was not he the equal of Tom

Driscoll? Ha! His pride rose higher and higher, carrying William Frederick with it in everwidening circles, until finally he arrived in the realm of pure artistic creation. Here the question of morality ceases to exist. The intellect, freed from the troublesome problems of ethics and legality, conceives, with a sole and single aim, the satisfaction of its own desires.

And then, suddenly, the face of the young man was illumined with a great light. This gave place to a deep, painful frown; and the frown, in its turn, to a sublime and portentous grin. He crossed to the table for a cigarette and finding the box empty, fished one of his discarded stubs from the porcelain urn and lit it with the detached air of a genius at his easel.

"After all," he muttered, "I shall have to ask Tom to help, but not with money. The question is, will he do it? Well,— he *must*. I'll make it as strong as I can. And,—let's see,—there's the William Penn Tablet, and the Thomas Jefferson Memorial, and the Statue of Franklin, and the Old Tower—"

William Frederick Marston had achieved an immortal conception.

At this point this tale assumes the dignity and importance of history, and we shall let the chroniclers speak for themselves. From the *Philadelphia Clarion*, September 21:

LIBERTY BELL DEFACED

Name of French Palmist Appears in Red Paint on its Surface

Police are at a Loss to Discover Perpetrator of Deed of Vandalism and are in Communication with the State Department at Washington.

Late last evening, or early this morning, some person or persons entered Independence Hall by a window at the rear and defaced the Liberty Bell by painting on it, in large red letters, the following:

Jules Mercade
Chiromancien
37 Rue de Rennes
Paris

The outrage was first discovered by H. P. Sawyer, who entered the room at eight o'clock this morning to assume his duties as guardian of the bell. He first noticed that the window leading from the room to the park at the rear was open. Startled, he hurried to the Bell to assure himself of its safety and soundness, and found it disfigured in the manner described above.

The guard whose duty it was to close up the building last night declares that the window was locked by him at nine o'clock; but that question is really of no importance, since the fastening was old and rusty, and could have been easily forced even without the aid of a tool. No one can be found who saw any person either in the park at the rear or near the window. The vandal evidently chose an hour when he was certain to be unobserved. The police have been unable to discover any clue what ever to his whereabouts or identity.

The authorities are at a loss to account for any possible motive. There was no attempt, apparently, at permanent mutilation. The paint used was ordinary house paint, easily removable by the application of turpentine. If it is really, as it seems to be, an advertisement of a French palmister who expects to escape pun-

ishment for the outrage he has instigated because of his distant residence from the scene of its commission, Monsieur Mercade will quickly discover his mistake. The State Department has already communicated with the proper authorities at Paris, asking them to apprehend Mercade, and a reply is expected not later than this afternoon.

This deplorable affair has revealed the lamentable lack of proper care by the authorities of our public museums and historical relics. It may be asserted without fear of successful contradiction .....

September 22nd.

It will be a matter of pleasure and gratification to every patriotic citizen to learn that Jules Mercade, whose name was found painted on the Liberty Bell yesterday morning, was arrested at his rooms at 37 Rue de Rennes, Paris, early yesterday afternoon.

According to Paris dispatches, Mercade exhibited no surprise at his arrest, since which time he has preserved a profound silence. He has even refused to admit his identity, and the police have been unable to establish it, since he appears to have occupied the rooms at 37 Rue de Rennes for few days only before his arrest. The prisoner seems, indeed, to be much amused at the position in which he finds himself, and it is the opinion of the French authorities that he expects to escape punishment for his act on account of lack of evidence, and then reap the advantage of the publicity his name has received.

Mercade has agreed to dispense with the formality of extradition on condition that he receive first-class steamship accommodations and that there be no outward sign of his status as a prisoner; and to this peculiar bargain the French authorities have agreed at the request of Ambassador Halleck, in order to avoid delay.

He will sail tomorrow from Cherbourg, on the *Daconia*, accompanied by a member of the Paris police.

September 29th.

If there be such a person as "Jules Mercade," and if he be responsible for the defacement of the Liberty Bell on September 21, it seems likely that, owing to the bungling of the Paris police, he will go unpunished.

The "Jules Mercade" whom a police officer brought over on the *Daconia*, which arrived at New York yesterday, proved to be no less a personage than William Frederick Marston, son of Jonathan Marston, the New York financier.

Young Marston seems to regard his experience as an amusing escapade, and though he is unable, or unwilling, to explain how he came to be taken for "Jules Mercade", and indeed refuses to discuss the affair in any way whatever, it is evident that he has enjoyed himself immensely at the expense of the much-vaunted Paris police. He was, of course, immediately released.

But Mr. Marston, however much he has enjoyed himself, has aided in the defeat of the ends of justice—though without such intention—by failing to assert and prove his identity at the time of his arrest. No doubt, he has gotten a great deal of fun out of it. But the defacement of the Liberty Bell was an offense against national sentiment and dignity, and all good citizens will agree that .....

At about eight o'clock in the evening of the day on which the Daconia arrived in New York, two men were seated, smoking at the dinner table in the Marston home on Fifth Avenue. The ladies had departed about fifteen minutes previously. The elder man was puff-

ing thoughtfully on a large black Cazadores; the younger had consumed two cigarettes and was starting on a third.

"That bridge over the Tiber at Athens is wonderful," said the younger man suddenly, breaking the oppressive silence with an effort. "I don't wonder you insisted I shouldn't miss it." He chattered on for a minute, stammered, and stopped.

"William," said the elder man in a voice deep, well-modulated, and musical, "You're a perfect ass. Don't try to play the innocent baby with me. I know you too well. At the same time, I have made a discovery. There is one man in this world who is even a a bigger idiot than you are."

Judging by the calm tranquillity with which the younger man received these rather forceful phrases, it is to be supposed that he had heard them before. He poured himself a pony of cognac and passed it to and fro under his nose.

"Of course," he said, sniffing with appreciation, "you arouse my curiosity. Who may this inconceivable idiot be?"

The elder man drew in a mouthful of smoke and expelled it with the proper care and deliberation before he answered. "The man," he said, "who, at your request, painted a monstrous, red, hideous sign on the Liberty Bell of our great country." Jonathan Marston, the terrible, smiled reminiscently—a smile of wisdom and understanding.

"And by the way," he continued presently, "it is really too bad that your little plot made it necessary to change your address. Of course that was why you missed my last cablegram. My advice to walk home was meant merely as a temporary pill. I wired you five hundred dollars the following day."

A Slip in the Path*

BY A. M. BARNES

THE S. C. & L. train was running south on the main line, under a full head of steam, exactly one hour and forty-three minutes behind schedule.

In a seat of the day-coach two men were in the midst of a rapid-fire conversation. Both were young, good-looking, clean-shaven, and well-dressed. They were about the same size, and there was but a shade's difference in the coloring of hair and eyes. But here the similarities ended. While the tanned cheeks and roughened skin of one man evidenced a life lived much out of doors, the cream-like pallor of the cheeks of the other and their smoother texture proclaimed the in-door man. Further, the deeply-drawn lines between the finely arched brows, the shadowed circles beneath the eyes, betokened the thinker, the student. Their clothes, too, were of different stamp. While one wore the smart tweeds of the business man, the clerical cut of the other's clothes was unmistakable.

The commercial man had come into the day-coach from the smoker. Finding it crowded, he had courteously requested a seat with the minister, and it was as courteously tendered. It did not take him long to plunge into conversation. He just had to talk, he declared, his eyes twinkling. Got so used to it in his business, never knew how to lay off to rest. In fact, his friends declared he was born with his tongue wagging, and it had never ceased since.

"Parson, I take it?"

The other nodded.

"Been long in the preaching business?"

"Quite ten years."

"You don't say! Must have been a kid when you began."

"I was past twenty. I am thirty-one now."

"Wouldn't have thought it. Why, I'm only a year ahead of you."

He was indeed of pronounced social tendency. No doubt he was in love with his own loquacity. It was apparent, too, that curiosity

* Copyright, 1913, by The Shortstory Publishing Company. Copyright secured in Great Britain. All rights reserved.

fairly oozed from him. The minister, used to all sorts and conditions of men, and having met several of this kind before, was more amused than offended.

They soon exchanged cards. Rev. Willard Asbury was in delicate script on one. On the other, set up from a more business-like font, appeared the name "Howard L. Newton." Then neatly tucked away in a corner: "Representing Pendleton, Duke & Co."

Apart from the inquisition of interrogations, the commercial man told some rattling good stories. The minister wasn't a sober-sides by any means. He knew when and how to laugh. But the inquisitor never gave over till he had drawn the minister's cat out of the bag, tail and all.

In due time it was learned that the minister was of the Methodist faith; that his conference had recently been held. This was his first year as a member; in fact, just the beginning of his first year. He was a transfer from the Louisiana to the Carolina conference. Millsburg, to which he was now on his way, was his initial appointment in Carolina.

"Millsburg!" ejaculated the other. "Well, you are in luck, man! That's a hustling town, I know. Go down there occasionally to sell goods. Finest people you ever saw. Wealthy, too. Got the most magnificent water power in the state and know how to use it. It has brought more than one man a fortune. Acquainted in Millsburg?"

Rev. Willard Asbury had to admit that he was not. His was rather a peculiar case, he explained. A short but severe illness had kept him from attending the conference. Didn't know anyone in the conference, not even his presiding elder; had only a passing acquaintance with one or two of the preachers. Absent from the conference, he hadn't met even the lay representatives from Millsburg. But he was certain of a hearty welcome. Letters in his suit-case assured him of that.

"Truth is," he said with a smile, "I'm known as a pretty good beggar of church money."

"Never knew a Methodist parson who wasn't," interrupted Howard L. Newton, as he slapped the other familiarly upon the knee and laughed.

"I believe that is our general reputation," agreed Rev. Asbury, "but I know some brethren too timid to ask even for what is theirs."

He lapsed into musing.

"Beg pardon. What were you about to tell me?" reminded the other.

"Oh, I believe about the new church they are building in Mills-

burg. It seems they have set their hearts on a $20,000 edifice."

"Well, they can afford it. Some of the Millsburg Methodists are richer than Biltmore cream."

"They've procured about $12,000," continued Rev. Asbury, "and now they are depending on me to raise the remaining $8,000, and do it speedily."

"Oh, you'll get it," assured Newton heartily. "No reason why you shouldn't. Nothing like the persuasive eloquence of parsons, especially among the women," and he laughed again.

Then he began to reel off on his own affairs. Seemed to think it the minister's due after submitting so good-naturedly to being pumped dry.

"I'm a stirrer-up of trade in notions. Been in the business now six years, but getting mighty tired of it. Too much of the life of a tramp in it to suit me. I'm a home man.

"Fact is," here he bent nearer in confidential attitude, "I've got something in prospect a hundred times more inviting. I don't look now as though I'm a dabbler in chemistry, do I? Well, I can see your surprise. But hold on! I come of a family where that sort of thing's as natural as the feathers on a duck's back. Grandfather was a distinguished M. D. and president of the State Medical College. Father won renown in scientific research; had a half dozen degrees and left us a bushel of decorations. Son and grandson, it seems, about to follow in their illustrious footsteps—ahem!

"Now, parson, don't you smile. I've been for ages working on this thing. First got the idea years ago when I was soldiering on the plains. I was but a youngster then, but it took deep hold of me and stuck. Ever heard of the mescal bean?" he queried suddenly. "Well, I see you haven't. It's a bean that grows in Mexico and in one or two localities of our own south-west. It's the 'happy medicine' of the Indians, the eraser of every woe from the blackboard of life. I've seen the Indians, glum as the devil one minute— Oh, I beg pardon, parson—and happy as a jay bird on the wing the next, and all because of a little nip at the mescal. And I've seen them go deeper and chew bean after bean, reveling in dreams of ecstasy, lords of glory for days.

"What the world needs, parson, what it fairly is thirsting and hungering for is happiness, enjoyment, a blotting-out of troubles. Now, can't you see how the man who could bring this to pass even in part, even temporarily, would be considered a public benefactor?

"Think of it! Your brain in a whirl, distracted, tortured by business cares and perplexities; your heart torn, distressed by a family

misunderstanding, a jar with a friend or loved one; your nerves gone to smash. Well, here's Lethe for a time, here's a surcease from torture; here's that which makes the skies roseate; here's a harmless little remedy—an exhilarant, mind you, and not an intoxicant. Who wouldn't take it and bless the man who discovered and prepared it?

"Oh, I see you consider me a mild sort of lunatic. But here! Don't you want to put it to the test?" He took from an inner pocket, as he spoke, a phial of crystal clearness, filled with a sparkling liquid of amber hue. "Don't you want just a drop or two to find out for yourself the truth of what I claim? It isn't perfected yet, but I've gone far enough for it to prove to you that I am on the right track. Don't you want a little bit of a blissful dream, parson?"

"No; I thank you. I don't need any producer of blissful dreams. The reality is better."

"Oh, I see! A happy man! A happy family!" He looked around the car as though expecting to see the happy family in evidence.

"No; I am alone in the world." A shadow passed over the minister's face. "I was an only child. Father and Mother died within two days of each other. Yellow fever in New Orleans."

"No wife? No kids? Too bad! You should see mine. Two; boy and girl. Five and three. Oh, they're It! I tell you, friend, there's nothing for a man so great as wife and kiddies."

The eyes of the other kindled. A flush crept into his cheeks.

"I believe you," he said, and his voice was far from steady.

Just then from the engine came a loud, prolonged blast, followed by two shorter ones. The speed of the train began to slacken.

The commercial man glanced out of the window.

"We are coming to Scranton," he announced. "That's your junction and where I have to stop for a little business. Have no idea you'll find your train there. The branch doesn't wait more than an hour on delayed trains, and ours is nearly two hours behind. But you needn't let it worry you. There's a genial host and a first rate hostelry. Best coffee you ever drank. We'll take a smoke after supper, and I'll tell you some more of my experiences out west. Hope you don't object to the weed?"

"Oh no; not in moderation."

Both trains left early the next morning, the one on the branch departing within ten minutes after the arrival of that on the main line.

The Methodist community of Millsburg was seething with cur-

iosity concerning the coming of the new minister. The stewards were besieged with questions, but all the information any of them could give was that set forth in the bishop's letter. The Rev. Willard Asbury was one of the most eloquent young ministers in the entire Methodist connection; an irreproachable pastor, and a prodigious worker. There was no man who could more quickly raise the additional funds for the completion of their new church edifice than he.

Every pew in St. James was filled on the following Sunday morning. There was a row of chairs up each aisle, a thing that didn't ordinarily occur, but then this was no ordinary occasion.

The young minister was unmistakably good looking. His clothes were of the latest clerical cut and fitted him to perfection; his linen was immaculate. His voice was clear and resonant, and he had not proceeded far in his sermon, when it became quite evident that the bishop had not overglossed the statement with reference to his eloquence. The sermon was not only eloquent, it was scholarly. He did not refer often to his notes, though he made no secret of having them. It is true, he was not altogether at ease. His embarrassment was more than once noticeable, but what young minister delivering his first sermon to a critical congregation, could have been otherwise? And St. James was known to be hypercritical.

The minister proved to be truly a hustler. The bishop had certainly hit it when he pronounced him a "prodigious worker." Early Monday morning, when ministers were generally supposed to lie abed late in order to recover from the strenuous duties of the Sabbath, he was out on the streets getting acquainted and putting in telling words for the new church building. His optimistic views were contagious. Those who had held back, asserting that the congregation could never accomplish a $20,000 building, were now following his lead enthusiastically. Members who had vowed they wouldn't give a dollar to the new building, because the old one was good enough, opened their purses to an astonishing extent. By the end of the following day the astounding news was being passed from lip to lip that the amazing young minister had actually secured a contribution of five hundred dollars from old Jeremy Coggins, the wealthiest as well as the stingiest member, and two hundred from young Julius Conroy, whose boast it had been that he did not believe in churches or ministers.

Of course, all this kept the minister at high tension. It was no matter of surprise, then, when he succumbed to a heart attack and had to go to bed for two days. Thus he couldn't attend the weekly

stewards' meeting, where all the business of the year was mapped out and discussed, but he sent word that they could count on him to be in harness when the pulling was to be done, and there wasn't a man among them who doubted it.

Old David Sutton, the church treasurer, a lawyer by profession, was a man intensely loyal to all home enterprises. When the Rev. Asbury discovered that the bulk of the $12,000 already raised was in the local bank and the remainder in Sutton's safe awaiting deposit in the same institution, he began mildly to protest.

"It should be in national banks," he said. "Besides, it is wise policy to scatter it. The bank here, I learn, is capitalized for only $250,000, and they are lending heavily to the mill men."

To Sutton's chagrin, the minister had considerable backing in his opinion. James Hibben, president of the bank, was an open scoffer at religion, therefore not popular with the church people.

Finally Sutton said to the minister, "Very well, you and the others can have your way. Come to my office tomorrow morning at ten o'clock. I'll turn over the money to you. You and any one of the stewards you select can go down to the city on the noon train and deposit it, and the consequences be on your heads."

The minister smiled.

"Very well, I'll take my share of it."

The minister was prompt, and he had dressed for the journey, bringing his alligator bag for the cash and drafts. Raymond Hall, the steward selected, was to meet him at the station, he told Sutton.

Sutton was going over the last packet of bills when a clerk entered by the inner door of the private office.

"A lady to see you, sir," he said briskly. "A gentleman with her. I tried to get her to wait, but she says her business is imperative. She must see you at once."

David Sutton frowned.

"Don't you see that I am engaged? I—"

But the clerk, a young man who sang in St. James choir, didn't wait for the completion of the sentence. He did a queer thing. He hurried across the office, unlocked, and threw open the outer door.

"What in blazes!" exclaimed Sutton. "Didn't I tell you—" but he stopped short. A young woman was well into the room. Sutton's eyes traveled beyond her, to the tall form of the man closely following.

"Hello, Morley!" he called out. "What the dickens are *you* doing around here?"

But Morley didn't reply. He waved the young woman forward.

At the same time his eyes closely surveyed the room. There wasn't an object in it that escaped him.

The young woman advanced rapidly. She was tall, graceful, and modishly attired. Sweetness and strength were in her face despite its pallor and the somewhat hard glitter of the eyes. She handed Sutton a card. "Miss Lettice Rayburn," he read.

Old David Sutton was the flower of courtesy where women were concerned. The one before him was unmistakably a lady. He was already on his feet.

"Be seated, Miss Rayburn," he said. "You come at an inopportune time, yet if your business is urgent—But first, let me introduce to you our minister, Rev. Willard Asbury."

She started violently, then threw out her hand to steady herself. "*Your minister?* Oh no, no, *no!*" she cried passionately. "Your minister is lying at this moment in St. Luke's Hospital, the victim of that fiend there and his drugs! But thank God! he was found in time by our loyal friend, Mr. Morley, though that scoundrel there sent him on a long journey. He will recover. He will soon be himself again."

There was the crash of a chair turning over, a scuffle, then Morley's voice saying:

"Oh no, 'Gentleman Jimmie,' not so fast! Put down that money! Hands up! You're my man this time! I'm 'loyal friend,' it is true, to Miss Rayburn and her betrothed, but I am also representative of the law. You are wanted for other things besides this, as you are well aware. How do you like the fit of those bracelets?"

The bracelets in question were a pair of handcuffs.

The young woman had lost her composure by now. She sank into a chair. Sobs shook her, but directly she raised her head and addressed Sutton again.

"When Willard didn't write, I knew something was wrong. He had just recovered from a severe illness, and I was truly alarmed. I knew no one here so I wrote to the postmaster. When his reply came that Willard was sick, I feared the worst. My place was beside him, so I started. On the way, I met Mr. Morley hastening to me. He had come upon Willard dazed and wandering, not able to remember even his own name. That fiend took care to give him a supply of the drugs, knowing that when he came from under the influence of the first dose, he would crave more. But thank God! he was almost himself again when we left him. His mind had cleared, and he was able to enlighten us. That villain there had stolen his clothes, his papers, and even his sermons."

"That accounts for the two masterly efforts he delivered," said Sutton dryly. "But it's astounding how much at home the scoundrel seemed in the pulpit."

"He once followed the profession of an actor," remarked Morley. "He has played many roles."

Lettice Rayburn rose suddenly. For an instant her lips quivered as she faced the scoundrel who had almost deprived her of her lover. Then as her head went up, her eyes were like blue flames behind their mist of tears.

"When you concocted your fiendish scheme," she said, "there was one thing on which you failed to count, the alertness of a woman's love."

"Satan's mess!" muttered 'Gentleman Jimmie'; "that *is* where I slipped. I forgot to ask the fellow if he had a sweetheart."

By Whatever Name*

BY FRANK HENRY SHOEMAKER

OF course the recent arrival in the Endor household was very, very welcome; that much is certain. In fact, the energetic debate which was disrupting the wonted quiet of the home was with a view to the later well-being of the little citizen who stared vacantly at the ceiling and made faces. He had patiently waited about the premises for a month now, notwithstanding which he had not yet been dignified by a title. And that was what all the discussion was about.

"But my dear!" protested the professor, "think of the depressing commonplaceness of William! The whole world is overrun with Williams, from the Conqueror down to our honored—"

"It was a good enough name for Father, and I like it," interrupted the professor's wife. "You cannot get far away from the ordinary names without being ridiculous; so what's the use?"

"My idea, on the contrary, my dear, is this," replied the professor, pausing in his walk and bringing the expository forefinger of his right hand into contact with the illustrative palm of his left. "Depart radically from the ordinary names, if you have at heart the welfare of your progeny. Do not condemn a helpless infant to struggle through this vale of tears without a distinctive and distinguishable cognomen. Williams and Thomases and Johns certainly have made a mark here and there in the world, but it has been in spite of their deplorably ordinary nomenclatorial designations. And furthermore," he continued with evident satisfaction, "I have today hit upon a name for our first-born which is admirable, commemorative, euphonious, distinctive. It is Pingree." And with a victorious gesture the professor seated himself, watching narrowly, however, to see how his idea would be received.

"Pingree!" repeated the professor's wife, testingly. "Pingree! Well, I don't dislike it very much, I believe." After a pause she suggested, "Pingree William, then?"

* Copyright, 1913, by The Shortstory Publishing Company. Copyright secured in Great Britain. All rights reserved.

The professor started up and paced the floor again. "Now my dear," he said, "while you are indisputably a party at interest, and possessed of equal or superior rights to my own in the premises, can I not persuade you to eliminate that commonplace name of William? I have selected the first name, in which suggestion you have acquiesced; now do you select the second name—almost anything but William, if you please."

So the professor's wife took the matter under advisement; for it was of too great moment for immediate decision. After much thought that night and early the next morning, she concluded that her family name, Canfield, should be bestowed in the second place. This was discussed at the breakfast table, and the choice approved by the professor.

It has always been a mystery to the professor that, notwithstanding his established theories and fairly well established practice with regard to concentration, certain times there be when vagrant thoughts obtrude without any apparent or discoverable reason. He has numerous cuff-cards bearing data in relation to these phenomena. Cuff-cards, it may be stated for the convenience of lexicographers, are memorandum-bearing cuffs cut to the proper filing size; a simple expedient whereby the labor of transcription to library cards is obviated, albeit they come higher by the hundred. One of these derelicts upon the waves of thought got across the professor's bows that morning. He stopped at the very crisis of his lecture, with a pained and surprised expression; tried to proceed, became aware that he was presenting the subject in a way which would read strangely in his pupil's notes, and summarily dismissed the class, fifteen minutes ahead of time. He caught the next car for his home.

"My dear," he exclaimed, bursting suddenly into the sitting room, "Canfield will never do—with Pingree. By itself it is unobjectionable, but with Pingree it is an impossibility. And I believe Pingree will have to be abandoned also; somehow it displeases me since—"

"Why, what on earth is the matter?" interrupted the professor's wife, dropping her sewing upon her lap. "What is wrong with the names—or either of them?"

"The circumstances are these, my dear," explained the professor, getting his right forefinger and left palm into that relativity without which it were for him folly to attempt elucidation. "Pingree sounds very well. Canfield sounds very well. Pingree Canfield sounds very well indeed. But consider that dire middle initial. Pingree C.! Does it not follow, as the night the day, that our child will be

nicknamed 'Greasy' in his very first game of marbles? Can you view with equanimity—"

And the professor stopped. For in this particular social pact the wife had a monopoly of the sense of humor, and her laughter was quite inexplicable to the serious-minded professor. A wholesome and musical laugh it was, and the professor loved it, laughing himself generally—as he did now—on account of its contagious character, though too often missing the humor of the situation which brought it forth.

"It is amusing, is it not?" remarked the professor rather doubtfully, after the merriment had subsided somewhat.

"It *is* amusing," replied the professor's wife, drying her eyes and resolutely dispelling the little camp-followers of mirth who persisted in their pursuit. "But you dear goose, why did you have to run home at once? Wouldn't it have kept until evening? I should not have undertaken the formal christening in your absence." And she took up her sewing, very much amused.

But that was one of the professor's idiosyncrasies. The matter in mind, be it whatsoever it might, must be pursued forthwith. His was a mentality not equipped with block signals or other safety apparatus, and it was imperative that he keep the main line clear, or suffer the consequence of bringing his trains of thought into collision.

"Of course, you are right," said the professor's wife soberly enough, after a moment's consideration. "That would be an unhappy name; though it does seem too bad, after all, to rob the other boys of the fun," she added mischievously. And then suddenly this remarkable wife was wafted away upon the wings of another gale of laughter, for absolutely no reason whatever—the lack of reason being so obvious that the professor did not join in, but waited patiently for enlightenment.

"I was just thinking," she finally vouchsafed, "how I should have enjoyed seeing your change of expression when this gruesome thought came to you." And she laughed again.

"My dear," said the professor gently, "it seems to me at times that you hark back to profound distances and trivial sources for amusement." Nevertheless he felt, rather guiltily, that his expression might indeed have changed somewhat at that awful moment; very slightly, perhaps. Only there was nothing funny about that.

Back to his work went the professor, lunching down town as was his wont and returning home in the late afternoon. After dinner he

went into the library and busied himself with some references. The professor's wife guided the still nameless one safely across the border of the Land of Nod, and went into the library with her sewing. The professor was absorbed in his work, and she did not interrupt him. But when he replaced his book on the shelf and began looking for another she spoke.

"So you do not like Pingree for a name."

"Pingree?" repeated the professor absent-mindedly. "Pingree? Oh! That matter of a name for the boy." He found the book he wanted and came back to the table. "Well, I must admit that the disagreeable consequence of a meddling juxtaposed initial has rather discontented me with it."

"How would Barton do? Your mother's father's name, you know. How does Barton Canfield sound?" The professor had opened his book, but the words lingered and finally fought their way into his attention.

"How? Barton Canfield? Barton! Why, I like that! Barton —that is a good name—very good. Strange we did not think of it sooner." And the professor was lost in his tome.

The subject came up at the breakfast table, but the professor was preoccupied with his plans for the day and did not enter into the matter with spirit, simply again expressing himself as quite satisfied with the names chosen.

With another class the professor was sailing the same seas as on the previous day, congratulating himself inwardly upon the more creditable voyage he would make, now that the troublesome derelict of the preceding trip was charted and avoidable. He had reached the same place in his lecture, when he stopped suddenly with an amazed and troubled expression, made an altogether unsatisfactory attempt to take up again the thread of his discourse, and announced curtly, "The class is dismissed." He put on his hat and left the classroom without awaiting the dispersal of his wondering students.

His troubled face as he strode up the walk brought the professor's wife to the door to meet him with anxious inquiries. He led the way into the sitting room before he ventured any words.

"As regards that name Barton," he began without preface, whereupon his wife breathed a deep sigh of relief and took up her sewing. "It is clearly impossible. Barton is a good name. Barton Canfield is above reproach. But it is, in this instance, our honored surname which makes for impossibility. Barton Endor! My dear,"—and the professor talked with both hands— "do you not see plainly that

Barton will be inevitably shortened to Bart? Bart Endor? Bartender! Bartender!" And the professor became inarticulate; while the professor's wife bit her lip, and kept biting it—for here was a strong man in pain, and it were inopportune to laugh.

"Clearly it is unthinkable," resumed the professor finally. "That our boy should grow up with such a name—not to mention the evil but too often potent effect of insistent suggestion—well, not—my dear, under the stress of circumstances permit me to sink to the undignified level of argot—not on your life.!"

"Well, well, it is easily remedied," said the professor's wife soothingly.

"Yes. We must have another name. I must get this off my mind. I am daily disgracing myself before my students." The professor winced as he thought of the two dismissed classes. "This matter must be settled or I shall find myself a fit subject for a class on mental disorders." The professor really looked haggard. "We must have a name, and right away—some name—any name to—"

"William?" suggested the professor's wife quietly, taking a very long and very deliberate stitch.

The professor looked actually relieved. "Well, yes," he said; "why not? It is a good, honest, common name." He pondered for a moment. "And I begin to sense in a vague way why, perhaps, it is so common." He made a note on his cuff, kissed his wife fondly, and went peacefully back to the university.

If the records are kept with any degree of accuracy, it is writ large upon the books of the Recording Angel that the professor's wife did not laugh—while the professor was in the house. But did she really succeed in arresting her merriment until he was quite beyond hearing—past the lilac bushes and out of the front gate? And after all, what does that matter?

As healthy youngsters will, by whatever name they may be called, William Canfield waxed and grew. The professor set great value upon the opportunity thus afforded of studying at first hand and intimately the marvels of a developing mind and body, each tiny petal as it unfolded calling forth his scientific enthusiasm and in the aggregate making for unprecedented growth in his collection of data. Only he did not know it was a flower that he was studying, and petals were never once mentioned in his notes. They dealt instead with reflexes and reactions and indications of perceptive growth, and other equally trivial things.

The professor's appreciation of William Canfield, he rather sud-

denly and quite disconcertingly concluded one day, was almost entirely psychological and zoological. His scrupulously trained mind was not receptive to many emotions, and he was honestly distressed to realize that no tender feelings toward his boy found any place in his thoughts. This was not altogether gratifying; but what would you? The truth was the main thing. So the professor put it all down on his cards, for he was hopelessly addicted to memoranda. He wrote these particular notes in Latin, being rather ashamed of them and knowing well that Latin affords excellent hiding. The professor's wife, by the way, could read Latin; but she could so much more readily read human nature that it was quite unnecessary in this instance.

And time passed by without any development which would justify the honest professor in modifying those wretched Latin notes. He perused them thoughtfully from time to time, and gazed inquiringly at the tip of his pen, but the most careful scrutiny failed to discover there a word to write in repudiation.

The professor's wife was always radiant, but when the professor reached home on one particular day some months later, her countenance was so superlatively happy that he was unable to account for it. He looked around for some unusually welcome visitor, and finding none in any reasonable degree of mock concealment about the rooms he scanned the walls for a new painting, and the center table for a literary acquisition of special merit; but in vain. The reason for her joy, however, was soon made apparent, for she brought William Canfield from his sacred precincts, balanced him carefully on his feet, extended her hands, and said:

"Show us how, Laddie!"

And William Canfield did then and there demonstrate his ability to take three successive steps, wabbly but entirely sincere and effective, into the arms of his mother.

"My honor!" exclaimed the professor—which was one of his most profound ejaculations, his honor being no joking matter. "Why, William Canfield can walk!" And in his delight he cradled the little one in his arms and wildly paced the floor, placing a large loud kiss upon the dimpled cheek—very much indeed like the kiss of a father, with not a smack of the psychologist or zoologist about it. And the professor's wife was very happy—so happy that her voice trembled a little as she said:

"Of course he can walk, dear. Why not? Didn't he inherit feet?" But not a word did she say of the long rehearsals which had

led up to this grand exhibition and triumph. And the professor continued to pace the floor with an unwonted amount of lingo-talk to his son and the astonished reiteration, "William Canfield can walk!"

This was a thing which had seemed to him so remote that the professor had not considered it seriously. He admitted in his notes that night (in English) that it had awakened in him an inexplicable emotion to observe that William Canfield had tentatively assumed perpendicularity, and that in some manner it seemed to markedly increase his esteem for the child to have it evince a desire to forego the quadrupedal method of locomotion.

And soon thereafter it was written in these notes that William had quite forsaken that objectionable mode of progression, and behaved just like a human being.

And in fulness and tract of time it appeared of record that the professor indulged in frequent walks around the square with William. And lots of other things about Willie which were in strange contrast to the ponderous and learned notes which had preceded. In fact, it is greatly to be feared that the scholarly tone of that formidable record became distinctly lower; for is it possible to conceive of a memorandum about the behavior of "Billy Boy" containing a seriously scientific observation?

The professor ran across those Latin notes one day. He started to read them again, but thought better of it, not being in a penitent mood. Instead, and far more wisely, he tore them deliberately into very small pieces, not in the manner of one who merely destroys a record, but more as though he had found a delightful occupation. And he consigned the fragments to the grate, watching the little flares of light and curls of smoke with much pleasure. The professor's wife came in while he was so engaged, and was struck by his beatific mien.

"What are you doing, dear?" she asked.

"Burning an error at the stake," he responded smilingly. "Where's my playmate?"

A Braver Man*

BY HAROLD DE POLO

HARRISON, veteran of the Spanish War, finished a tale about one of his privates who, seeing a companion lying wounded on the field of battle, had rushed out from the trenches, reached his goal, and staggered back to safety with the body of his friend slung across his shoulder, while all the time countless bullets whistled over his head and kicked up little spurts of dirt around his feet.

"And that," ended Harrison, his bronzed face tinged with red at the memory of the thing, "is what *I* call a brave man!"

He was sitting at a table in his club, enjoying his demi-tasse and cordial with two friends, the younger of whom, his face glowing, thumped the table hard. "By Jove, by Jove!" he exclaimed almost breathlessly, "And so do I!"

But Segrin, the eldest of the trio, was not so hasty in his commendation of the act. He was a slim, quiet man, cautious, precise, usually correct in his assertions, somewhat over forty, but creating the impression of being much older. He stroked his sharp chin and narrowed his grey eyes. "Yes," he said, slowly, "I quite agree with you that he was a brave man. Nevertheless I do not call an act of that kind the height of bravery. Your man was in a very fever of excitement; the blood, the danger, the roar of the firing, the smell of powder, the sight of other brave deeds, the glory he would receive,—all these things naturally served to instill in him an amount of courage more than normal. Remember, I am not trying to detract from the tribute which he justly deserves; I am simply mentioning that I do not believe an act of that kind to be the height of bravery. My idea of it is a thing done, not on the spur of the moment, not when circumstances and environment are favorable, not when one's brain is hot and maddened, but when one is cool, collected, capable of judging the matter sanely and normally, and doing the thing that he is almost positive will mean inevitable disaster,—whether it be to his life or his hopes. Yes, a man

* Copyright, 1913, by The Shortstory Publishing Company. Copyright secured in Great Britain. All rights reserved.

committing such an act is the man who has, in my mind, reached the very pinnacle of bravery."

"I don't know about that," started Bertram, the youngest; but Harrison lifted his hand and nodded quietly to him.

"I say, Segrin," he laughed, "I'll wager you've a good yarn to prove your point, eh?"

The elder man smiled thinly; then his face became grave. "Yes, I have; and I think it does uphold my statement, most conclusively. I am rather peculiar—shall I say fortunate?—in being able to narrate it, for I believe that I am the only one who saw the thing from an impartial angle."

Bertram leaned forward, his elbows on the table; Harrison lit a cigar and settled back in his chair; while Segrin nursed his thin grey mustache and began:

"The thing happened some ten years ago, while I was traveling in Mexico, partly for business, mostly for pleasure. I was in Mexico City when I met the man in my tale, stopping there, I must truthfully admit, chiefly because I had become acquainted with a most charming American girl, who was touring the country with her father. I shall call them Smith, one always does that,—or else Jones,—when one wishes to hide the identity of people. I was, as I said, rather taken with the girl myself, but I soon found out that a poor devil like me stood an exceedingly slim chance, when suitors galore, young and old, rich and poor, were as thick as mosquitoes in Jersey; especially, also, when I noticed that she was quite favorably disposed toward a young mining engineer, a handsome, clean, young chap called—Jones. You see I do bring in the other stereotyped name, after all. So I simply told myself that I was out of the running and became, for he was really a very decent old fellow, the friend of her father, and sat back with him to watch the play of youth and love.

"The girl was really fascinating; she was of the slim, willowy type, not the kind that is noticeably thin, but all soft and graceful curves. I have seen her walking, in the evening under the moonlight, and she seemed like some wondrous fairy princess from the pages of an old legend, tripping over the ground as if her feet scarcely touched it, and all radiance. Rather a romantic estimate for a practical fogy like myself, eh, Harrison? But it's true. Her face was decidedly of the sad wistful type, with those unfathomable grey eyes that eat into a man's heart at first sight; but yet I have seen them gay and laughing, sparkling with mischief and fun. Oh,

no, she was not sad and morose; even far from it. Also, she was clever, surprisingly clever; though not the kind of woman who is always letting the fact be known, so that men retreat in fear of displaying their ignorance. She was really up on everything, and had sound, sane views on all matters, big and little. But with all that, it was apparently a difficult task for her to decide upon which of her suitors to accept, though she was plainly leaning, I saw, toward our young friend Jones. And then *my* brave man entered the scene.

"Gabriel Roldan was his name,— there is no use substituting a fictitious one, and he was at the time, professor of botany in the College of Mexico, although not more than thirty years of age. He did not come of *sangre azule,* no; and doubtless you will be surprised to hear that he was an Indian, straight back, generation after generation, of the Maya tribe, of which there are several scattered throughout the jungle in the state of Campeche. An old Mexican naturalist, passing through the Maya village one day, had taken Gabriel, then not more than ten years of age, for his guide about the vicinity. He had been strongly impressed with the boy's cleverness, his instinctive brightness, and especially with his great interest in his own work. The end of it all was that he took him with him to Mexico City, had him educated as if he had been his own son, and died peacefully, at a ripe old age, with the knowledge that he had made a brilliant man and seen him rise to a respected position.

"Bertram, I see you frowning; it is because you feel a certain sense of repugnance at the thought of a white girl being interested in an Indian. But I tell you, my friends, that never have I seen a finer man, or a more brainy one. He could master almost anything in no time, and spoke seven or eight languages just as well as he did his own. He was charming, courteous, witty, generous, honorable,—everything that one could wish. Also, his form and features, for some reason, were not like those of his race. He was rather tall, almost six feet, and had one of the most compact and symmetrical figures that I have ever seen, all good hard muscles and steely sinews, and he carried himself superbly, like some thoroughbred racer whose whole body works evenly and gracefully. His face was of the old Castillian type; with a long straight nose, wide, honest, brown eyes; a firm mouth and determined chin, and a high, broad forehead: one of those finely cut faces that appear to have been chiseled by the hand of a master. Yes, in every respect he was one of the finest men it has been my privilege to know.

Everyone loved him, and he drew people to him, though unconsciously and naturally, as if he were some powerful magnet passing through a field of needles.

"We met him at the opera; a party containing Miss Smith and her father, young Jones, and myself. The American consul brought him around to our box between the acts, and we all found him most agreeable. I noticed that the girl, especially, seemed almost entirely wrapped up in his conversation, which was always punctuated, at the end of a sentence, by one of his delightful smiles, showing the even, milk-white teeth and the pleasant twinkle in his brown eyes. He himself, although he did not show it, was undoubtedly struck with her. The only thing that told me so was a little indrawn breath, a widening and a deeper twinkling of his eyes, when, upon leaving, he received a cordial invitation to come and see them some afternoon. She also, when he was going, reddened the least little bit and heaved an infinitesimal sigh. I was interested at once, remember, and therefore observed every action and expression of them both, so I believe that I was the only one to notice it.

"Roldan did call; as soon as was permissible. I happened to be there at the time and I made up my mind, after half an hour had gone by, that my young friend Jones was going to have the very deuce of a time to keep in the lead. It seemed to me like one of those cases of love at first sight. Each was apparently absolutely absorbed with the conversation, the actions, the face,—everything of the other, yet in that quiet, natural way that is not obvious to every onlooker, but as I told you, I watched the game very carefully.

"Oh, young Jones? No I don't think he noticed anything at the the time. That was just the beginning.

"Finally Roldan became almost a daily caller, and was always cordially asked to come again, even by old Smith himself, who had taken a great liking to this foreigner who would listen to him by the hour;—for Smith was a talkative old chap, you must know, and occasionally a trifle dull.

"Young Jones eventually saw how things were going, and did his utmost, but in a clean, decent way, to set the pace as he formerly had. Yes, Jones was a man, every inch, and through it all I never saw either of them so much as scowl at the other. Each knew what he wanted, each knew that the other was fair and open. After some three months or so of it, I saw that my young countryman had sadly lost ground. Between Roldan and the girl, al-

though he had not said a word, there seemed to be that perfect understanding which some people have. She knew that he loved her; and he, I know, felt she loved him. Anyway, I want to say that the most important thing is the fact that, had he asked her to marry him at the time, there is not one chance in a hundred that he would have been refused. Remember that. Remember, also, that he was not ignorant of it. Yes, remember that he could have had what he wanted, I am certain, for the mere asking.

"One day, when he called, I noticed that his face was a trifle paler than usual, with lines under the eyes that told of a sleepless night. He had come to suggest a little trip which he thought would be most interesting; down into the state of Campeche, where the village of his tribe lay. He thought that it would be rather out of the ordinary to us all—Jones and myself were included in the invitation—and that we might like to be shown, by one who knew it well, a part of Mexico where comparatively few whites ever go.

"The girl clapped her hands joyously, agreeing that it would surely be delightful; old Smith hemmed and hawed for a moment, and then thanked Roldan heartily; while Jones and myself accepted with pleasure. But the one thing that stands out in my mind, clearly and painfully, is the look that went over Roldan's face as Miss Smith bubbled her approval of the journey. There was something in it that cut me deeply,—very deeply. It all passed in a second, and I think that no one else saw it. His fine aristocratic face went a sickly white, and his eyes had in them a look that you sometimes see in those of a deer, when the animal is gasping out its life after being struck by a hunter's bullet—that hopeless, agonizing look. He regained himself immediately and continued, with his smile, discussing plans for the trip. But while he talked I thought of nothing except that momentarily whitened face and those stricken eyes.

"In about a week we left. The trip is a fairly pleasant one. Down to Vera Cruz by rail, along the coast line until you come to Laguna del Carmen, and then, by a little launch he had hired for the occasion, across a lagoon for some fifty miles and up a snaky, winding, intricate river for some hundred more. There, in a clearing of jungle on the river bank, lay the Maya camp, ill-smelling, squalid. I believe that I was more interested in Roldan, during the journey, than in the scenery, although it was quite gorgeous; and I noticed that every day that brought us further toward his birthplace seemed to put a heavier strain upon him. He stood up under

it wonderfully, so much so that I am sure, once more, that I was the only one who knew what he was undergoing. Well, finally we arrived there.

"The hastier my recounting what followed, the better. It—it hurts me even to this day to think of it. As our little launch chugged up to the bank, and Roldan got out and assisted Miss Smith and her father to alight, the natives swarmed around us like so many flies, their curiosity aroused to the limit by that wonderful boat that went through the water without the aid of a man's paddle. The girl, I remember, had her arm through that of Roldan, telling him, with her rippling laugh, how good he had been to think of the trip, as she was sure it would be *so* interesting. I saw him smile; not his usual smile, but a rather thin and wistful one. He spoke to one of the natives in their dialect Spanish, asking him, I gathered, where a certain house was situated. Then, on being answered, he walked through the line of low thatched huts, where women, sitting in the doorways, were shaping their corn meal for *tortillas*, sometimes on their bare legs; and where little children, playing in the dirt, rolled about as naked as God had made them; and where men, lazy and sleepy, clad in their black-and-white pantaloons, loose tunic, and worn, beggarly sandals, chattered unintelligibly as we strangers passed by. Roldan's face was set, though he smiled and talked with his usual ease. The girl, too, seemed just a trifle nervous, though when she looked up into his face she appeared to brush unpleasant thoughts aside.

"Presently he stopped in front of a hut at the end of the line. A woman, old, toothless, with a haggard, wrinkled, leathery face, her hair awry, her thin, talon-like fingers clutching her ragged soiled wrapper in front, so that it would hold together, ambled forth and let a hoarse cry of joy escape her. I saw Roldan's teeth click and his chin jut out. Then he left the American girl and sprang forward, folding the aged, tottering form of the old Maya woman in his arms and pressing his lips to her forehead. 'My mother,' he cried, 'my mother,' and his voice was a trifle unsteady.

"What old Smith did I don't know; what young Jones did I don't know; I know that all I did was to watch the girl. She, God help her,—and him, too,—stepped back as if she had been struck full in the face. Her skin was chalky; her breasts heaving; her whole form shivering convulsively. I saw Jones come forward and offer her his arm, and she gripped it so strongly that I am sure her nails almost entered his flesh.

"I suffered then; I suffered perhaps as much as either of them.

"The filth, the huts, the people, the utter width between their own kinds,— all these things had never struck the girl before. But now, on seeing the mother who had borne him, they all came home to her at a single blow,—a very strong blow. Jones had gone a bit red, and seemed to hold her arm in a protecting manner, as if he would shield her from the alien who loved her; and old Smith looked askance at the tall, clean form of the Indian. In a moment or so Roldan came over to us, with a smile on his face that must have hurt him to keep there. He asked us, lightly, what part of the village we first cared to inspect.

"*She* answered him. Her words were very low and choppy, and she tried to smile; but her smile was wan. 'We—that is—I—we think that we have—have seen—enough. . We—' Then she stopped, and Jones gripped her around the waist as she swayed for an instant; and I noticed that when she steadied herself she smiled up at the young American with the same smile that I had formerly seen her give Roldan, before this visit to his village.

"The Indian bowed gravely; 'Surely, Miss Smith, I quite understand.' His voice was absolutely mechanical, like that of a toy doll. Then we walked, silently, to the launch on the river bank. Old Smith in front, with the air of the offended parent; the girl, with Jones talking comfortingly to her, a little farther behind; while I brought up the rear with Roldan, who walked along with a stony face. Once there, it was Jones who helped the girl and her stout and puffy father aboard; then he got in and I followed. But the Indian remained on the bank, his arms folded, his head high, a brave and courteous smile on his face.

"'I wish you a pleasant journey,' he said, in that same mechanical voice. 'This is what I came from; this is where I belong; this is where I stay.' Then he pushed off the launch, and I motioned to Jones that the kindest thing to do was to get started as soon as possible.

"That is all. We left him, standing there proudly, like some mighty being who has decreed his own fate. Then, as Miss Smith swept a furtive glance at him as we rounded a little bend in the river, I saw a spasm of pain cross his face and go through his whole body so that he shuddered convulsively. And that was my last look at the man who was brave enough to march knowingly, thinking it the honorable thing to do, into the jaws of almost positive death to his greatest hopes.